PASSION
熱情

vol. 3

By
SHINOBU GOTOH
SHOKO TAKAKU

June

PASSION vol. 3 熱情

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熱情
Passion.
SPECIAL EXTRA EPISODE

YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE, BUT YOU COULD HAVE AT LEAST CALLED FIRST.
THUMP
I MEAN, WHAT DO YOU HAVE YOUR CELL PHONE FOR...!!
IF YOU'D COME A LITTLE LATER, I WOULD HAVE BEEN FAST ASLEEP. NEITHER THE DOORBELL NOR THE PHONE WOULD HAVE WOKEN ME!
YOU WOULD HAVE COME ALL THE WAY OVER HERE FOR NOTHING.
TEACHER!
I'M SORRY, SIR.
AND THERE WOULD'VE BEEN NO TRAIN TO TAKE YOU BACK AT HIS HOUR, EITHER

FREE TALK

HELLO, EVERYONE.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF VOLUME 2..
HOW HAVE YOU ALL BEEN?

"PASSION" HAS FINALLY REACHED VOLUME 3..
AND IT'S ALL THANKS TO THE FANS WHO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THIS SERIES. IT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

THANKS ALSO GO TO SHINOBU GOTOH SENSEI, THE WRITER OF THIS SERIES. EVERY TIME I'M HANDED A NEW STORY TO DRAW, I ANXIOUSLY AWAIT THE FATE OF MR. SHIMA AND HIKARU'S RELATIONSHIP, JUST LIKE ANY OTHER READER..
MAYBE EVEN MORE!

ALSO, I AM, AS ALWAYS, VERY GRATEFUL TO MY EDITOR.

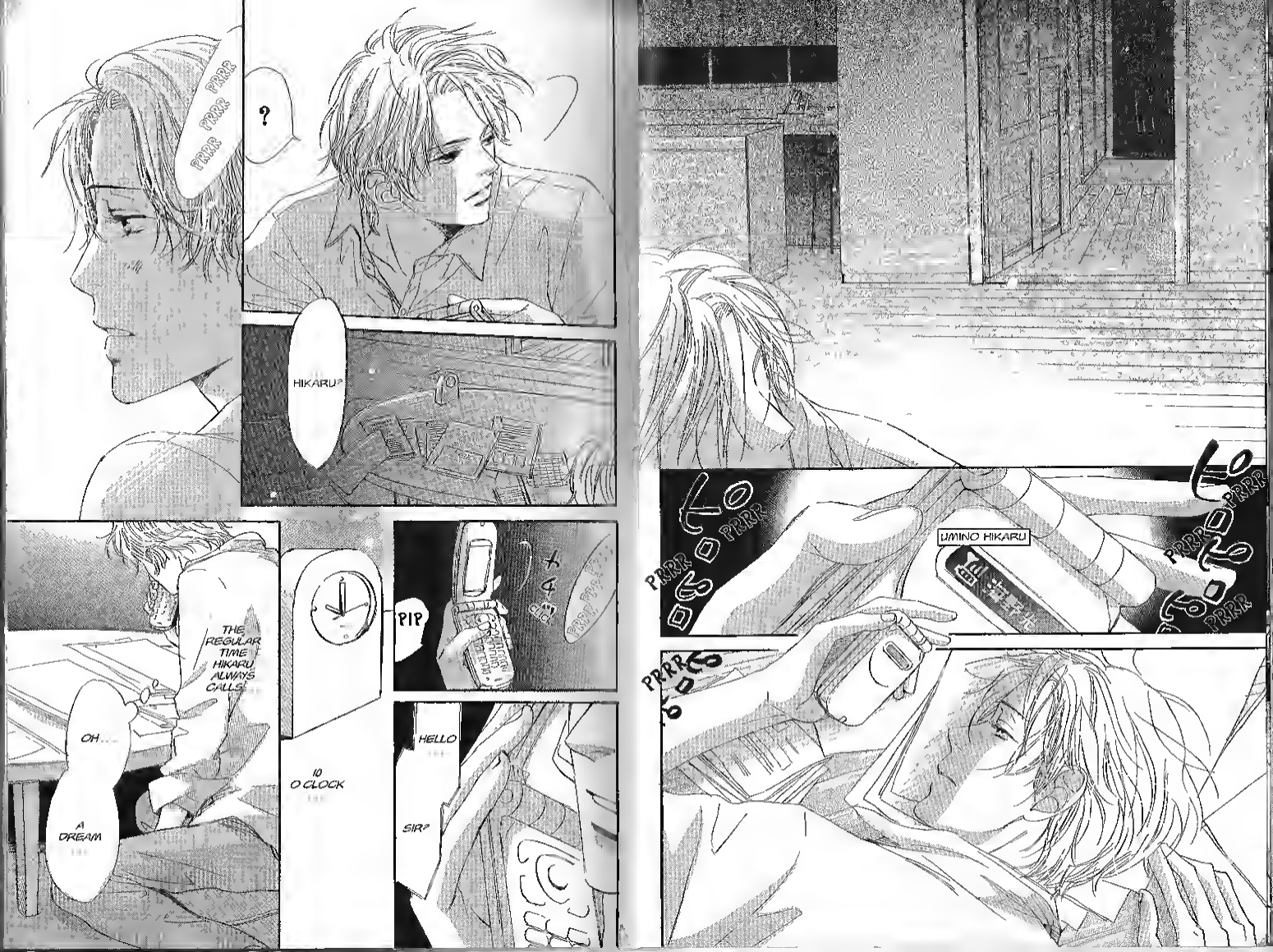
"PASSION" WILL CONTINUE FOR A LITTLE LONGER, AND I HOPE IT WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE YOUR SUPPORT.

2005. SHOKO TAKAKU

ASSISTANTS/ HATCHIKO, MIYUKICHI-SAMA, IKUE-SAMA, AZUSA-SAMA, AKIKO-SAMA, UI-UI-SAMA

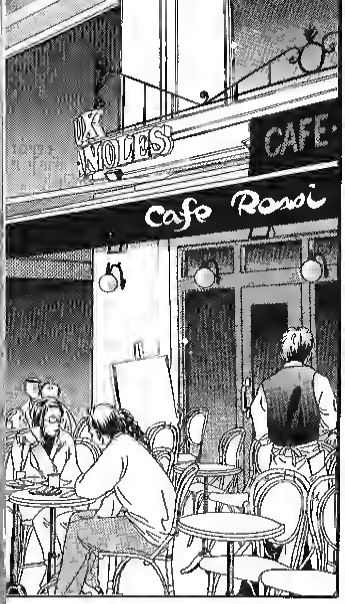
THANK YOU ALL!

HIKARU...
PRRR...
!
ギュ
HUG?
OH...
PRRR
PRRR
PRRR


PRRR PRRR PRRR
?
HIKARU?
THE REGULAR TIME HIKARU ALWAYS CALLS!
OH....
A DREAM
10 O CLOCK
PIP
PRRR PRRR
HELLO
SIR?
PRRR PRRR PRRR
UMINO HIKARU
PRRR PRRR PRRR
PRRR PRRR PRRR

NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE.
IN FACT, I'M GRATEFUL.
I HAVE SOME PAPERWORK I'VE GOT TO FINISH UP BY TONIGHT.
SO, I DID WAKE YOU.
I'M SORRY, SIR.
HEY... TEACHER?
I'D LIKE TO COME TO THE FESTIVAL, TOO.
I'VE GAINED A NEW APPRECIATION FOR ALL THE TEACHERS WHO HANDLED THIS BEFORE ME.
YEAH. I NEVER KNEW IT WAS THIS MUCH WORK.
YOU MEAN THE PAPERWORK FOR THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL?
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT MUST BE TOUGH BEING HEAD OF THE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE.
SIR...
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
HELLO?
OH. OH, YEAH. SORRY.
IT'S NOTHING.
SO, IT WAS JUST A DREAM.
THUMP!
...
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE FINISHING UP SOME WORK I BROUGHT HOME...
...AND INSTEAD, HERE I AM HAVING A STRANGE DREAM.
NO, NO.
I MEAN, I HAD DOZED OFF, BUT...
...I HADN'T MEANT TO.
WERE YOU ASLEEP ALREADY?
I'M SORRY, SIR.

I WANT TO SEE YOU SO BADLY...
...SIR.
I KNOW, HIKARU.
W-WAIT, TEACHER!
HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I LAST TOUCHED HIM?
I DON'T MIND, BUT
YEAH...
I KNOW...
...YOU DO KNOW I'LL BE TOO BUSY TO DO ANYTHING WITH YOU, RIGHT?
ON THAT D-DAY, YOU, TEACHER, AND I BECAME REAL LOVERS...
IT'S AN IMPORTANT DATE TO ME...
BUT WHEN IT'S OVER...
...IS IT OKAY?
HMM?
WOULD THAT BE OKAY?
IF YOU WANT TO SEE ME
PROMISE TO WORK HARD AT YOUR JOB AND EXAM STUDIES
YEAH, I WILL!
I WANT TO SEE YOU TOO!
CAN I STAY OVER?
THAT NIGHT...
YOUR ROOM...
WELL THEN, SIR...
I'LL TALK TO YOU AGAIN TOMORROW.
...TEACHER...
HEH HEH.
...OKAY

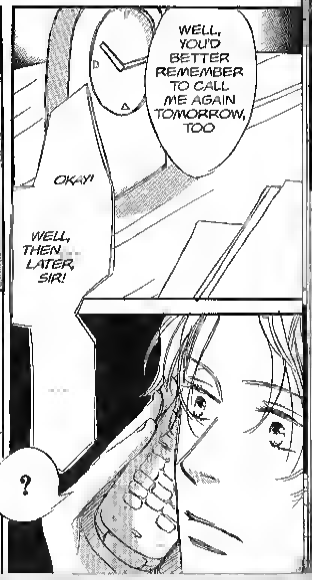

CAFE
Cafe Rossi

UMINO SEMPAI-!
HERE WE ARE AGAIN!

FROM THAT SHY HIKARU!
I CAN JUST IMAGINE THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE

BUT ....
DON'T WORRY. JUST HEARING YOUR VOICE HAS ENERGIZED ME
REALLY?
UH ... UM.
SORRY TO HAVE BOTHERED YOU WHEN YOU MUST BE TIRED, SIR.
WHAT? YOU'RE STILL WORRIED ABOUT THAT, HIKARU?
ALL RIGHT
... OH!
WHAT IS IT?

KISS
CLICK
THAT KID ....!
BEEEP
BEEEP


WELL, YOU'D BETTER REMEMBER TO CALL ME AGAIN TOMORROW, TOO
OKAY!
WELL, THEN ... LATER, SIR!
?

THE GIRLS WHO FIND THAT OUT GIVE UP ON HIM AS BEING TOO IMMATURE...
AND THE GIRLS WHO DON'T KNOW ABOUT HIM FIGURE HE'S JUST NOT INTERESTED...
I'M SURE THERE'VE BEEN COUNTLESS OPPORTUNITIES HE'S LET PASS BY
LOOK, THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN
OH MAN!
WHAT A WASTE!
わはは HA HA HA
TSK TSK, GENTLEMEN. WHAT'S THIS I HEAR?
IT'S SO OBVIOUS THEY'RE HITTING ON HIM-BUT HIKARU'S OBLIVIOUS
ROMANCE IS JUST NOT HIKARU'S THING, HUH?
WELCOME...
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY?
SHOPPING, PERHAPS?
YUP!
THAT, AND I WANT TO LOOK OVER THE SCHOOL I'M APPLYING TO!
OH, RIGHT YOU'RE SENIORS FACING COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS, AREN'T YOU, ONODA?
YOU'LL HAVE A LOT OF COMPETITION BUT...
GOOD LUCK TO YOU, ONODA!
ポフッ!
HEY, UMINO SEMPAI
MAMI'S COLLEGE OF CHOICE...
SHE CHOSE THE SAME SCHOOL AS YOU!
OH?
REALLY?
OUR COLLEGE MUST BE POPULAR, HUH?

NOW, NOW! WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT, MR. NAGISA?
BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE A STEADY LOVER...
RIGHT?
HE HAS NO INTEREST IN FINDING A GIRLFRIEND IN THIS PLACE ANYWAY
NO WAY!
WE'RE NOT THAT CONSIDERATE
OH, I SEE. I BET YOU'RE USING HIKARU AS BAIT TO TROLL FOR THE LEFT-OVERS, EH?
NO, NOT A LOVER, BUT...
APPARENTLY THERE'S A "MADONNA" HE HAS A CRUSH ON BACK AT HOME
A "MADONNA"?

YOU WERE HAVING A PRETTY LIVELY CONVERSATION THERE ABOUT MY HIKARU
GOOD MORNING!
OH! MR. NAGISA!
WELL, HE'S NOT JUST YOUR HIKARU EVERYONE LOVES HIM!
HUH! NOW THERE'S A CONVENIENT PRETEXT FOR GOSSIPING!
HEY! HEY!
UMINO SEMPAAAI... DON'T GO...
AS FELLOW CO-WORKERS AND FRIENDS
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GO OUT THERE TO BAIL HIM OUT?
AND?

HIKARU IS MINE!
ANY RIVALS WILL BE ELIMINATED
THAT MEANS LITTLE ONODA-CHAN'S CRUSH IS ONE-WAY FOR HER, TOO
POOR THING
YOU DON'T SOUND SORRY AT ALL WHEN YOU SAY IT, MR NAGISA
WELL, OF COURSE NOT!
ORDER, PLEASE!
MR NAGISA! HOW SCARY! HA HA HA

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S ALL ONE-WAY ON HIKARU'S PART?
BUT, SADLY...
SHE ALREADY HAS SOMEONE.
IT MUST BE, MUSTN'T IT?
AND THE REASON HE GOES BACK HOME ALL THE TIME,
IS TO SEE HER, EVEN IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT
SUPPOSEDLY, THE REASON HIKARU IS EVEN WORKING HERE IS BECAUSE HE'S SPENDING IT ALL ON HER....
HMM
HOW TOUCHING
YEAH.
HE NEVER MENTIONS HER HIMSELF, BUT...
BY ALL ACCOUNTS, SHE'S THE SCHOOL DOCTOR AT HIKARU'S ALMA MATER. A REAL CATCH.
SUPPOSEDLY, SHE'S SO HOT THAT THE AGE DIFFERENCE ISN'T EVEN AN ISSUE

DON'T BE SO SHY
IT MAKES YOU EVEN CUTER.
WH WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
PLEASE STOP KIDDING AROUND
GLANCE
OH, WELL...
SOMEONE MORE MATURE IS MY TYPE, THOUGH.
HMPH
A POUTING BEAUTY ISN'T TOO BAD, EITHER...
OH?

GOOD MORNING, HIKARU!
HUG
DON'T YOU GO CHEATING ON ME JUST BECAUSE YOU'LL BE OUT OF MY SIGHT FOR A WHILE, HIKARU!
I GUESS STARTING TOMORROW I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU UNTIL YOUR EXAMS ARE OVER WITH, HMM?
GOOD MORNING, MR NAGISA
WHOA...
OH!
LOOKING CUTE AS EVER TODAY, I SEE...
MY HIKARU.

HUH?
OH...
I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR VITAMINS AFTER THAT.
RIGHT NOW, I THINK SLEEP WOULD DO YOU MORE GOOD THAN PILLS.
AH...
OH, BUT...
I GUESS COMING IN HERE ASKING FOR VITAMINS GOES AGAINST THAT
WELL, ENOUGH.
ARE YOU SURE?
MR. SHIMA, IF YOU'D LIKE, WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A LITTLE LIE-DOWN?
YOU'VE GOT A BREAK THIS PERIOD, DON'T YOU?
IF YOU TAKE THEM FIRST, THE CAFFEINE IN THEM MAY BE TOO STRONG.
THERE
HERE YOU GO
CREAK...
INFIRMARY
保健室
OH, MR SHIMA
GA CREAK...
MS. MORIKAWA.
HAVE YOU GOT ANY
YOU'RE LOOKING MORE PALE WITH EACH PASSING DAY
カチャ CLATTER.
カチャ CLATTER.

すぅ…zz…
DING DONG
RING GONG

ぽすん!
PAT!
AHH…
THIS FEELS GOOD…
SEE?
EVEN IF YOU DON'T FALL ASLEEP, JUST LYING DOWN MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE.
I'LL WAKE YOU BY LUNCH TIME.
OH THEN CAN I STAY HERE RIGHT UP UNTIL THE END OF LUNCH HOUR?
MY STOMACH FEELS SO HEAVY
AND I DON'T THINK I COULD EAT ANYTHING, ANYWAY
I UNDERSTAND
SHHK
HAVE A NICE NAP, MR SHIMA
SIGH

AND SO? WHAT ABOUT THIS MAN?
OOH!
HE WAS ACTING REALLY FAMILIAR!!
HE EVEN WENT OVER SUDDENLY, AND HUGGED SEMPAI FOR NO REASON!
BY OLDER, YOU MEAN...?
UMM...
A GEEZER OF ABOUT 25 OR 26.
HE'S OLDER ANYWAY PART-TIME EMPLOYEE
GEEZER
AT 25-26...
SLUMP
BUT THAT MAN! HE WAS JUST SO... DISGUSTING!
...CALLING HIM, "MY HIKARU," AND EVERYTHING...
OH, SO YOU'VE DECIDED TO GO THROUGH WITH THAT?
JUST WHEN I'D BEEN PLANNING TO INVITE SEMPAI TO OUR SCHOOL FESTIVAL
SO I COULD CONFESS MY FEELINGS TO HIM THERE
THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT I'D JUST TELL HIM DIRECTLY
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I FLIRT WITH HIM, HE DOESN'T SEEM TO GET IT
IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SO DENSE!
YOU GUESSED IT
I'M SORRY!
BUT I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
OH...
IS SOMEONE HERE?
MS. MORIKAWA! LISTEN TO THIS!
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?!
GLITTER!
YOU SEE...
ON SUNDAY, I WENT TO THE CAFÉ WHERE SEMPAI WORKS
SHHH!
BUT THEN, THERE WAS THIS HORRIBLE MAN THERE!!
A MAN?
YES...
I'D HEARD THAT HE'S TAKING SOME TIME OFF FOR EXAMS STARTING NEXT WEEK.
I HURRIED OVER THERE TO SEE HIM.
YOU MEAN THE ALUMNI FROM THIS PLACE THAT YOU'VE GOT A CRUSH ON, MISS ONODA?
SEMPAI...?
OH...

AND YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE?
WHISPER
I CAN UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT...
YOU NEED TO CALM DOWN, MISS ONODA.
PLEASE CALM DOWN
MR. SHIMA I KNOW YOU'RE STILL ANGRY
OH! SORRY!
UM, MISS ONODA...?
THIS SEMPAI THAT YOU LIKE...
IS IT HIKARU UMINO WHO GRADUATED LAST YEAR?
NOD
HIKARU?
...
CAN YOU IMAGINE? AN OLD PERVERT LIKE HIM? STAY AWAY!
I CAN'T EVEN STAND HIM ALONE, BUT NOW HE'S GOING TO BE TAGGING ALONG WITH SEMPAI!
WHISPER
HE SAID, "HIKARU'S ALMA MATER? NOW I'VE GOT TO GO!"
WHISPER
THAT GEEZER HAD THE NERVE TO SAY HE WAS COMING, TOO!
THE MOST ANNOYING THING IS THAT WHEN I INVITED SEMPAI, AND ONLY SEMPAI,
I SEE YOUR POINT
I WON'T STAND FOR IT!!
HE'S GOING TO BE WITH SEMPAI ON THE WAY HERE AND ON THE WAY BACK, TOO!
THEN YOU KNOW WHAT?
GLANCE
THAT GEEZER LOOKED DIRECTLY AT ME WHILE HE WAS HUGGING SEMPAI AND SMIRKED!
LIKE HE WAS DARING ME TO GET JEALOUS!
ISN'T HE THE BIGGEST JERK EVER?!
I SEE...
WHAT TO DO

203
海野
UMINO
OH, GOOD...
ACHOO!
I'M GLAD HE WASN'T AWAKE TO HEAR IT...
...FOR MORE THAN ONE REASON... I'M SO GLAD.
VVVVVV
VVVVVV

THANKS FOR LISTENING, TEACHER!!
I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE OUT TO SOME CREEP!
GLATTER!
I'VE DECIDED!
I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT SEMPAI HAS TO COME HERE BY HIMSELF!
RIGHT? DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S WHAT I SHOULD DO, TEACHER?!
I GUESS SO...
THUMP
SHIN

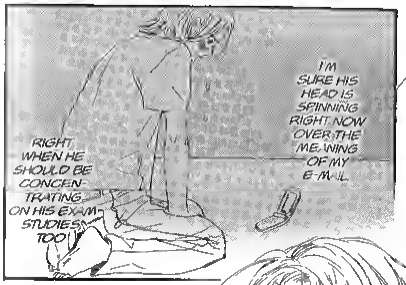
OH, IT'S E-MAIL FROM TEACHER.
PIP
OH!
IT'S THE 10 O'CLOCK ALARM.
TODAY I'M CALLING FROM MY APARTMENT, SO...
IT SHOULD BE OKAY TO CALL TEACHER AT HOME, TOO.
HUH?
"YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME TO THE SCHOOL FAIR."
NO WAY...
DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG?
PIP
PIP
PIP
CLIK
CLIK
CLIK
HUH?
THERE'S NO SUBJECT HEADER, EITHER...
???
MESSAGE IT SAYS I DON'T HAVE TO COME, BUT...
I CAN ONLY INTERPRET IT AS SAYING "DON'T COME."
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
WHY?
THIS...
I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING...
...ABOUT THIS.
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
BA-THUMP
PRRRRR...
PRRRRR...
PRRRRR...
PRRR... CLICK
PRRRRR...
I'M CURRENTLY UNABLE TO ANSWER YOUR CALL.
PLEASE LEAVE YOUR NAME, NUMBER, AND MESSAGE AFTER THE TONE, AND...
YEESH...
IS MY HUNCH CORRECT...?

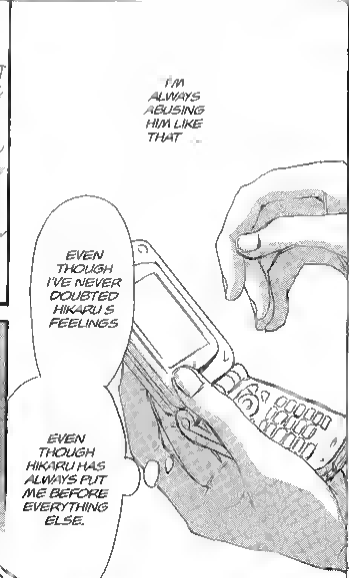
THINGS WILL NEVER CHANGE LIKE THIS...
I'M THE ONE WHO'S ACTING CHILDISH.
ADVANCEMENT SURVEY
CLASS 3RD YEAR, CLASS C
NAME ONODA, MAMI
FLAP...
DURING THOSE DAYS WHEN HIKARU AND I PLAYED AT BEING LOVERS...
...I COULD NEVER STAND IT WHEN I SAW HIKARU BEING CHUMMY WITH SOMEONE ELSE.
ALL BECAUSE I WANTED HIM TO THINK OF ME AND ONLY ME...
BECAUSE OF THAT I MADE HIKARU SCOWL AT THE ROOFTOP LOOKING TO ME.
WHAT AM I SAYING?
I'LL TRY CALLING AGAIN
UM, SORRY
WELL TALK TO YOU LATER
SLUMP...
PIP
BEEEEP
...IS HE JUST SCREENING OR...
SIR? GOOD EVENING. I READ YOUR MAIL.
...IS HE REALLY UNAVAILABLE...
UM... UHH... WELL, DOES IT MEAN
I WON'T BE ABLE TO SEE YOU THAT NIGHT EITH... OH, I MEAN
WELL... TALK TO YOU LATER
WHY DO I FEEL SO NERVOUS?
PIP
I'LL TRY CALLING AGAIN.
WHY DO I FEEL...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

STARE...
THERE'S NO REPLY BACK FROM TEACHER...
USUALLY IF I LEAVE A MESSAGE HE CALLS ME BACK, NO MATTER HOW LATE IT IS...
TIC カチコチ TOC
203
UMINO
海野

KNOCK KNOCK!
MAYBE I'LL TRY CALLING HIM JUST ONE MORE TIME...
SIGH
I KNEW IT- THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG
OR RATHER I PROBABLY DID SOMETHING WRONG
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
AND ANYWAY IT'D BE WEIRD DISCUSSING THIS WITH MY LOVER'S EX
BUT LOOK AT THE TIME!!
OH!
MAYBE MR. AMAMIYA WOULD KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT IT?

HIKARU
HIS VOICE SOUNDS SO ANXIOUS.


I'M SURE HIS HEAD IS SPINNING RIGHT NOW OVER THE MEANING OF MY E-MAIL.
RIGHT WHEN HE SHOULD BE CONCENTRATING ON HIS EXAM STUDIES TOO!


I'M ALWAYS ABUSING HIM LIKE THAT...
EVEN THOUGH I'VE NEVER DOUBTED HIKARU'S FEELINGS
EVEN THOUGH HIKARU HAS ALWAYS PUT ME BEFORE EVERYTHING ELSE.

WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
SIGH
AND SEEING HIKARU REACT THIS WAY...
MAKES ME A LITTLE HAPPY.
THE VERY PERSON WHO TOLD HIKARU TO CONCENTRATE ON HIS WORK...
IS THE SAME ONE WHO'S KEEPING HIM FROM DOING SO ME

NOT!!
I GOT SO LONELY WITHOUT SEEING YOUR FACE JUST ONE DAY, HIKARU.
THAT'S WHY I HAD TO COME SEE YOU.
BEER
WHISH
TH... THANK YOU VERY MUCH
WE CAME BEARING GIFTS OF BEER.
BEER
WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE!
THAT'S RIGHT...
TODAY'S A WEEKDAY.
AHAHAHA
YOU'RE SO MELODRAMATIC, MR. NAGISA.
I'M SORRY, BUT TONIGHT'S JUST NOT A GOOD...
HUH?
OH...
OH?
PRETTY NICE ROOM YOU'VE GOT.
CAN I COME IN FOR A SEC?
SO IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN TEACHER.

KCHAK
TEACHER?
KNOCK KNOCK!
YO!!
WORKING HARD, MAN?!
O... OH... YOU SURPRISED ME.

YO
ガチャン KCHAK
?!
MR. NAGISA?
KNOCK KNOCK!
HUH?

UM...
SURE, BUT...
ぼす FROM
IT'S, OH THIS DOOR, RIGHT?
I NEED TO USE YOUR BATHROOM
SORRY HIKARU
WHAT HAPPENED?

ガチャ
WHOA!
STARE...
NOTHING...
WHAT'S WRONG, HIKARU?

UH, NO
I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE OFFER, BUT...
MR. NAGISA, BETTER NOT BE TOO PUSHY
YOUR BELOVED HIKARU WILL START TO HATE YOU.

OOPS!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I GUESS I'LL RETREAT FOR TODAY, THEN.

YOUR STUDIES...
IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE WITH, I CAN HELP YOU OUT ALL RIGHT?
...HUH?

LATER, HIKARU GOOD NIGHT!
I'LL DROP BY AGAIN... A LITTLE EARLIER NEXT TIME.
YES...
SEE YOU

GOOD NIGHT!
OH! THE BEER
THANKS FOR THE BEER!
WHEW
PFFT
OH COME ON, MR NAGISA!
KCHAK
QUIT KIDDING AROUND ALREA
THUMP...
KNOCK KNOCK!

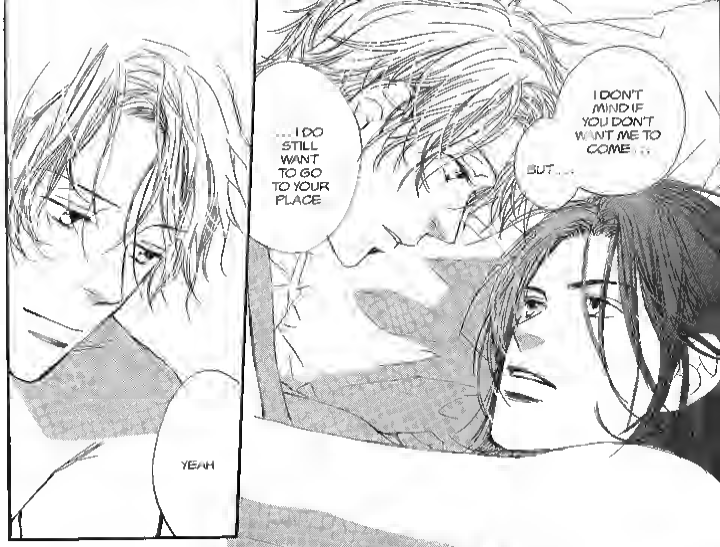
BUT
IT'S TRUE THAT I WAS LONELY WITHOUT YOU, YOU KNOW
I'M GOING - I'M LEAVING NOW
OOH SCARY! YOU DON'T HAVE TO GLARE
SORRY FOR INTERRUPTING YOUR STUDIES
HUH....
HIKARU...
MR. NAGISA!!
WHA..!
IT'S JUST A FORM OF GREETING
KISS
GIMME A GOOD-NIGHT HUG
SQUEEZE
IT'S A HABIT I PICKED UP LIVING OVERSEAS YOU KNOW?
SEE YA, HIKARU

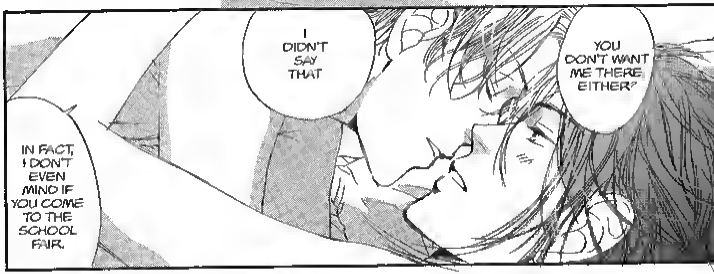
I CAME TO USE YOUR BATH ROOM
MAY I COME IN?
SIR
YES!
YES!
YES!
TEACHER!
GOOD EVENING
HUH?
HUH ?
ごめん
DRIP
DROP
OH

YES!
SIR...
SIR...
I WANTED TO SEE HIM
TO TOUCH HIM...
SO MUCH I COULDN'T STAND IT
EVEN THOUGH I'VE GOT TO BE AT SCHOOL TOMORROW...
EVEN THOUGH I HAVE A MOUND OF WORK TO GET THROUGH BY TONIGHT
I JUST HAD TO SEE YOU...
COULDN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER THAT'S WHY I CAME
NO!
I KNOW...
I WAS JUST GOING TO SEE YOUR FACE THEN LEAVE
HIKARU...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE
WHAT?
"H" STARE...
SHALL WE?

JUST A LITTLE LONGER AND I'LL BE ABLE TO BUY A CAR...
THEN I'LL ALWAYS DRIVE YOU.
SIR JUST A LITTLE LONGER...
HIKARU?
HM?
I'M SORRY I PUNISH YOU SO MUCH, HIKARU.
I'M THE ONE THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN ANXIOUS...
...FROM THE VERY BEGINNING
THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS DID THINGS TO TEST YOU.
WE'LL BE ABLE TO STAY TOGETHER A LITTLE LONGER, THEN.
I SEE.
THANK YOU.
ABOUT THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL...
THE FIRST TRAIN LEAVES IN AN HOUR.
BUT I GUESS I'D BETTER GROW OUT OF THAT HABIT SOON.
BEFORE HIKARU GETS FED UP WITH ME.

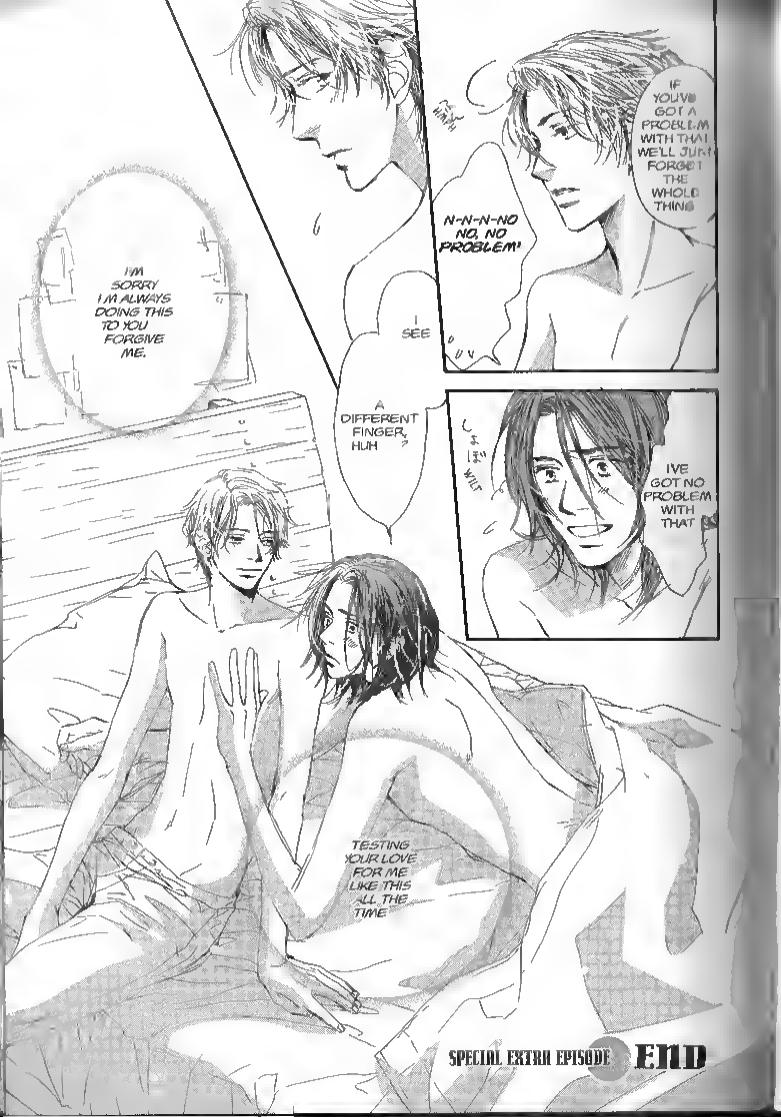
HUH... OH! UH, YEAH!
BUT TEACHER...
YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T WANT A RING...
I COULDN'T WEAR IT ON A REGULAR BASIS COULD I?
NOT WHERE I WORK
THAT'S WHY I SAID NO
WHAT?
DIDN'T YOU WANT TO BUY A PAIR OF MATCHING RINGS?
A TRINKET LIKE THAT IS NECESSARY IN LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS RIGHT?
NOW I THINK I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FELT WHEN YOU SAID SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THE PAST.
BUT IS IT REALLY OKAY WITH YOU?


...I DO STILL WANT TO GO TO YOUR PLACE
I DON'T MIND IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME...
BUT...
YEAH


I DIDN'T SAY THAT
YOU DON'T WANT ME THERE, EITHER?
IN FACT, I DON'T EVEN MIND IF YOU COME TO THE SCHOOL FAIR.

HIKARU SOMEDAY SOON, WHEN WE'VE GOT A LITTLE TIME—
LET'S GO SHOPPING TOGETHER.
SIR?

JUST FORGET I EVER SENT THAT E-MAIL
...TEACHER?


I'M SORRY I'M ALWAYS DOING THIS TO YOU FORGIVE ME.
I SEE
A DIFFERENT FINGER, HUH?
N-N-N-NO NO, NO PROBLEM!
IF YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT WE'LL JUST FORGET THE WHOLE THING
I'VE GOT NO PROBLEM WITH THAT
TESTING YOUR LOVE FOR ME LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME...
SPECIAL EXTRA EPISODE END

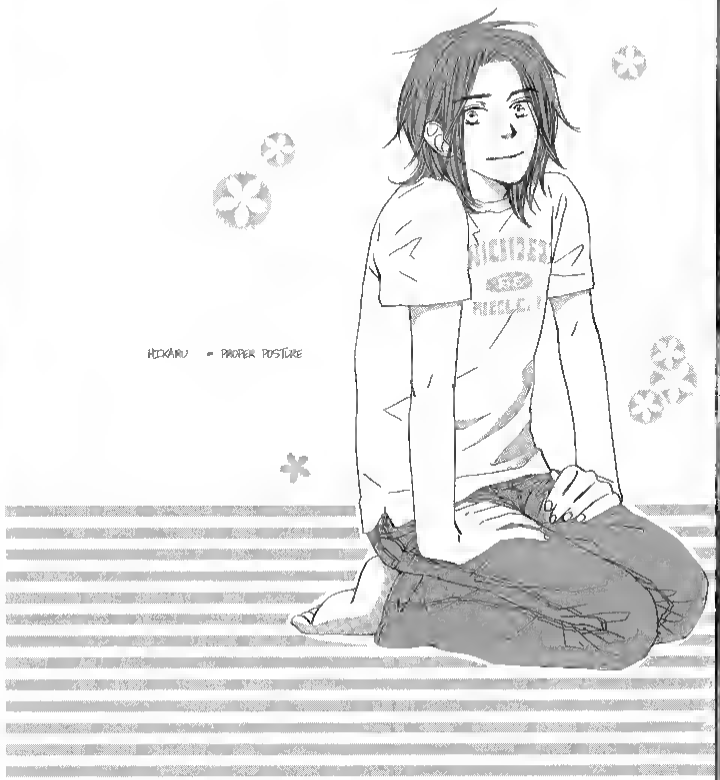
CHUCK
NO CHEATING ON ME, HIKARU
HEH, HEH!!
WHAAAAT?
ANY FINGER BUT MY LEFT RING FINGER.
I CAN'T WEAR MINE THERE, BUT I WANT YOU TO WEAR YOURS ON YOUR LEFT RING FINGER.
...HUH?
SURE, I'D BE HAPPY TO, BUT...
UM, WHICH FINGER ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR YOURS ON?

DIG IN!
TEACHER, WE WANT TO JOIN YOU, TOO!
OOH SO LUCKY! HOMEMADE LUNCH BY MS MORIKAWA!
QUIET!
DON'T DISRUPT MY ENJOYMENT OF THIS MOMENT! CAN'T YOU SEE I'M FLANKED BY BEAUTY ON EITHER SIDE?

MR SHIMA

Passion.7
熱情

PLEASE HAVE SOME, TOO MR. SHIMA
WELL THEN LET'S EAT!
HIGA
FINALLY! PEACE AND QUIET!
CLAP
YES, PLEASE HELP YOURSELF
IN FACT, I ACTUALLY MADE ALL OF THIS FOR YOU
UH, YES
BUT
GO ON, SHIMA DON'T BE SHY
TEN MORE DAYS UNTIL THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL
THANK YOU...
...FOR GOING TO ALL THIS TROUBLE FOR ME
I MADE SURE TO KEEP ALL THE FOOD LIGHT AND SIMPLE
THAT WAY, I FIGURED IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR YOU TO EAT... EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH OF AN APPETITE



HIKARU = PROPER POSTURE

THESE DAYS WE'VE NOT HAD ANY SPARE TIME FOR A RELAXED DATE LIKE THAT.
NO.
NOT YET
WELL, IMBALANCE OR NOT, BEING ABLE TO COOK SOMETHING IS BETTER THAN NOT BEING ABLE TO COOK AT ALL
HAVE YOU EVER TASTED ANY OF THIS "CAFÉ FOOD" OF UMINO'S, SHIMA?
I'M SORRY, MR. SHIMA.
DO YOU THINK YOU COULD TAKE OVER A CLASS THIS SUNDAY AFTER NOON?
AFTER NOON
ON SUNDAY?
AND BESIDES...
OH!
HERE YOU ARE!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERYWHERE.
HUFF
HUFF
HELLO! IT'S THANKS TO MY CULINARY SKILLS.
THE RICE BALL TASTES BETTER SOMEHOW WHEN EATEN OUTDOORS!
COME TO THINK OF IT, I CAN'T REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I HAD A PROPER MEAL...
AS HEAD OF THE FESTIVAL PREPARATION COMMITTEE...
...I'VE NOT HAD A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP FOR SEVERAL DAYS.
WOW, THIS IS DELICIOUS!!
HAHA
IT SEEMS SO
BY THE WAY, UMINO-KUN LIVES ON HIS OWN, TOO, RIGHT?
IS HE PREPARING HIS OWN MEALS PROPERLY?
YOU SEE HE WORKS IN A CAFÉ...
AND HE'S COMPLAINING ABOUT THE IMBALANCE IN HIS REPERTOIRE BECAUSE ALL HE CAN COOK IS CAFÉ FOOD.

THAT NEW UNIVERSITY THAT WAS JUST BUILT, THE ONE THAT YOU WANTED SCOPING OUT...
ME AND MR. SHIMA ARE SLATED TO GO THERE THIS WEEKEND
AMAMIYA?
AMAMIYA?
I'M SURE THERE ARE OTHER TEACHERS YOU CAN ASK, AREN'T THERE?
PLEASE LET MR. SHIMA OFF ON THIS ONE
I SEE... OH DEAR, WHAT SHOULD I DO?
IT'S SO DIFFICULT TO ASK THE MARRIED TEACHERS TO WORK WEEKENDS
MUMBLE
THE ASSEMBLE TEACHERS ALREADY HAVE OTHER PLANS AND
MUMBLE
MR. SHIMA MAY COLLAPSE DUE TO EXHAUSTION EVEN BEFORE THE FESTIVAL STARTS IF YOU KEEP OVERWORKING HIM LIKE THAT.
HEAD ADMINISTRATOR
RIGHT NOW I'M ONLY SUPPOSED TO COME IN ON SATURDAYS BECAUSE OF MY PREPARATIONS FOR THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL BUT...
ON SUNDAY, TOO?
YOU SEE, MR. SUZUKI ALSO COACHES THE BASKETBALL TEAM AND A SUDDEN GAME HAS BEEN SCHEDULED...
I KNOW BUT WE'RE SHORT-HANDED RIGHT NOW
I NEED SOMEONE TO TAKE OVER HIS CLASS
SIGH
SCHOOL TEACHERS SURE HAVE IT ROUGH.
SORRY, HEAD ADMINISTRATOR.
MR. SHIMA ALREADY HAS A PRIOR ENGAGEMENT.
YOU'D THINK IT'S A PLUM JOB BECAUSE THEY GET THE SUMMER AND WINTER OFF JUST LIKE THE STUDENTS...
BUT IN ACTUALITY, THEIR "SUMMER VACATION" LASTS AN AVERAGE OF ONLY THREE OR FOUR DAYS.

NO...
IT'S NOT THAT, BUT...
WHAT?
DID I BUTT IN?
THEN JUST BE GRATE-FUL!
...YOU'RE SPENDING THIS SUNDAY WITH ME!
SHIMA...
HUH?
HAVE SOME TEA
OH THANKS
WELL, THEN IT'S DECIDED
OH
BUT...
THE CAFE
THAT'S HOW IT IS
MY DAY OFF HAS BEEN CANCELLED.
SO MAYBE THIS WORKED OUT FOR THE BEST...?
I PROBABLY COULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THE DAY OFF ANYWAY
IT'S BEEN NEARLY HALF A MONTH ALREADY SINCE THAT PROMISE
"LET'S GO SHOPPING TOGETHER."

OH...
I HAVE TO HELP WITH THE SCHOOL CLEAN-UP THAT AFTER-NOON
I SEE...
WOW... BEING HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE IS TOUGH EVEN AFTER THE FESTIVAL IS OVER, HUH?
LAST YEAR, I WASN'T HEAD OF THE FESTIVAL PLANNING COMMIT TEE
EVEN THOUGH THE STUDENTS HAVE THE DAY OFF?
AND DIDN'T YOU HAVE THE DAY AFTER THE FAIR OFF LAST YEAR, SIR?
I DON'T THINK I'LL HAVE ANY TIME FOR SHOPPING THE DAY AFTER THE FESTIVAL
I'M SORRY, HIKARU... AFTER I BROUGHT IT UP AND EVERY-THING...
HUH? IT'S OKAY.
WHY SHOULD YOU APOLOGIZE, TEACHER?
NOW THAT HIKARU'S EXAMS ARE OVER...
I THOUGHT WE'D FINALLY HAVE THE TIME TO GO PICK A PAIR OUT TOGETHER.
"DIDN'T YOU WANT TO BUY A PAIR OF MATCHING RINGS?"
I SUPPOSE...
I GUESS THAT'LL HAVE TO DO
WHAT DAY SHALL WE DECIDE ON?
OH, WHAT ABOUT THE DAY AFTER THE FESTI-VAL?
UH WELL
THE DAY AFTER I'VE SPENT THE NIGHT AT YOUR PLACE!
UM
UM
UM
SILENCE
WELL, I GUESS WE'LL GO SHOPPING ONCE THE FESTIVAL IS DONE!

I KNOW I SHOULD HANG UP, BUT...
UM...
YOUR DINNER...
SORRY, SIR...
BREAK IS SUPPOSED TO LAST A LITTLE LONGER, BUT...
IT'S ALL RIGHT
HM? WHAT IS IT?
I KNOW I HAVE TO GO...
YEAH...
U...UM...
TILL TOMORROW, THEN.
OH
HUH? WHAT IS IT?
THAT'S RIGHT
BE SURE TO EAT...
HA!
OKAY YOU TOO.

BUT NOW, I'LL GET TO GO PICK ONE OUT WITH TEACHER.
THAT FACT ALONE WILL DEEPEN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RING.
IT WON'T BE JUST "MY" SPECIAL RING... IT WILL BE "OUR" SPECIAL RING.
OH, UH, I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
HIKARU! THE MANAGER'S CALLING FOR YOU.
I'M HAPPY...
JUST BEING ABLE TO GO RING SHOPPING TOGETHER WITH YOU.
AT FIRST I'D BEEN PLANNING ON GOING TO BUY IT ALONE...

EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NOTHING ELSE TO SAY...
UM...
"U... UM..."
cafe Rousi
MANAGER?
YOU CALLED?
OH, HIKARU

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?
SHOULD I MAKE YOU BREAKFAST THE MORNING AFTER I'VE SLEPT OVER?
OKAY!
YEAH, SURE!
NEXT TIME...
WILL YOU COOK ME SOME OF YOUR "CAFE FOOD"?
I'LL BE SURE TO THINK UP A SPECIAL MENU JUST FOR YOU!
GOT IT
SOUNDS GOOD I LOOK FORWARD TO IT
DON'T LET ME DOWN
GOOD NIGHT...
PIP
WELL... BYE, HIKARU.
OKAY GOOD NIGHT, SIR.

I SUPPOSE THOSE ARE ABOUT THE ONLY REASONS
THAT ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO WORK ON A SUNDAY
SIGH...
HOW SHOULD I SPEND THAT DAY...?
MY SUDDENLY EMPTY SUNDAY AFTERNOON
OKAY
HIKARU! COULD YOU GET THE ORDER FOR TABLE SEVEN?
I CAN'T EVEN GO STAY AT MR. SHIMA'S PLACE
NOT IF HE'S GOT OTHER MATTERS TO ATTEND TO

OH,
BUT I
MY DATE WITH TEACHER'S BEEN CANCELLED, SO
I'D ACTUALLY RATHER WORK.
YOU CAN TAKE SUNDAY AFTERNOON OFF AFTER ALL
HUH?
YOU SEE, THAT FOOL KODAKA...
IT'LL BE MORE MONEY FOR THE CAR
AND THE RINGS!
HE CAME CRYING TO ME, BEGGING TO HAVE SUNDAY OFF
I'LL BET YOU ANYTHING HIS GIRL EITHER DUMPED HIM OR CANCELLED THEIR DATE
!
どキ!
PANG
JUST A FEW MINUTES AGO, AND SOBBING NO LESS
HE CALLS ME UP, PLEADING, "PLEASE LET ME COME IN TO WORK ON SUNDAY - !"
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

MR. SHIMA!!
AND MS. MORIKAWA AND MR. AMAMIYA.

HIKARU!
DID YOU SEE THEM?
HEY, HEY THOSE CUSTOMERS THAT JUST CAME IN...
THE ONES BEING LED TO TABLE NUMBER 2.
YEAH WHO ARE THOSE THREE?
YOU TAKE A LOOK TOO, HIKARU
Cafe Rossi

OH-!
LOOK, LOOK.
OVER THERE!

THEN THAT BEAUTIFUL WOMAN...
SHE'S THE "MADONNA"... THAT~ HIKARU'S GOT A CRUSH ON?
WHAT?
YOU KNOW THEM?!
ARE THEY THE TEACHERS FROM YOUR OLD SCHOOL?
YEAH
OH, WAIT!
COULD IT BE?
IS IT FAIR FOR A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER TO BE THAT HOT?
...

MAN, YOU REALLY ARE OBTUSE!
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHAT DO YOU MEAN HIKARU?
HUH? HIKARU-?
IS THAT YOUR TYPE OR SOMETHING?
HUH?
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT, ONODA?
I SEE-!
SO, THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T GO FOR ONODA CHAN!
ギョっ
HUH?!
HEY, UMINO!

I DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIDENCE AT ALL...
SOMETIMES EVEN I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT
EVEN THOUGH WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR ALMOST A YEAR
DON'T LOOK SO DOWN
TRUMP
YOU'RE NOT BAD-LOOKING EITHER.
ACTUALLY I AM THE ONE THAT IS "MR. SHIMA'S LOVER."
BUT...
STOP MEDDLING IN OTHER PEOPLE'S AFFAIRS!
HEY, HEY!
MANAGER...

AND NOT JUST ONE
BUT ALL THREE OF THEM
WOW—AND THOSE TWO SURE MAKE A GOOD COUPLE
HIKARU!!
YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST A STUD LIKE THAT BUT—
DON'T GIVE UP!
TOTALLY! A HUNK AND A HOTTIE MADE FOR EACH OTHER.
HUH?
SO IS THAT HOW IT LOOKS TO EVERYONE ELSE, TOO?
DOOM
EVEN THOUGH THEY BROKE UP LONG AGO
THEY STILL MAKE A GOOD MATCH...?!

WELCOME.
YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.
THAT GARÇON LOOK SUITS YOU, UMINO-KUN.
TH-
THANK YOU VERY MUCH

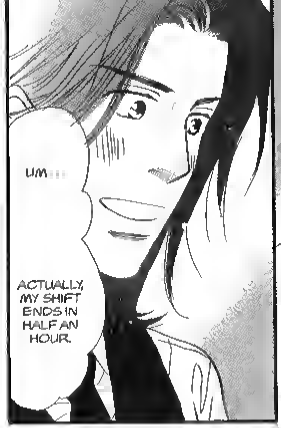
GO AND GREET THEM PROPERLY.
GO, HIKARU!
THEY CAME ALL THIS WAY TO SEE YOU.
YES, SIR!

SO, WILL YOU BE GOING BACK TO LOOK AT THAT UNIVERSITY SOME MORE LATER THIS AFTERNOON?
NO, WE'RE ALL DONE THERE
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? IF THE FOOD'S GOOD, SHALL WE HAVE OUR LUNCH HERE?
WE JUST HAPPENED TO BE PASSING BY...
SO WE THOUGHT WE'D STOP IN TO TAKE A GANDER AT YOU IN YOUR GARÇON UNIFORM
I ONLY INVITED SHIMA ALONG, BUT...
FOR SOME REASON, MS. MORIKAWA TAGGED ALONG.
THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT YOU TWO WOULD GET UP TO IF I LEFT YOU ALONE.
I CAME ALONG TO PLAY CHAPERONE!
...ARE YOU THAT CURIOUS ABOUT OUR PLANS?
BLUSH
...HUH?
HMM? UMINO...

IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME, TOO SHIMA?
SEEING UMINO AT WORK...
YEAH, IT IS.
HA! LOOK AT HIKARU!
HE'S BLUSHING AT THE COMPLIMENT!
WHAT ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE TODAY?
ARE YOU MAKING SURPRISE INSPECTIONS OF ALUMNI OR SOMETHING?
UM...
U...
WH... WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
I FEEL TOO EMBARRASSED TO LOOK TEACHER IN THE EYE...
OF COURSE NOT!
YOU AND YOUR SILLY IDEAS-
WE CAME DOWN HERE TODAY TO SURVEY THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED UNIVERSITY!

HIKARU
WHAT DO YOU FEEL LIKE HAVING FOR LUNCH?

BYE, GUYS!
SEE YOU LATER!
45
MUKMUK
MOGUMOGU


UM...
ACTUALLY, MY SHIFT ENDS IN HALF AN HOUR.

WHEN DOES YOUR SHIFT HERE END, UMINO-KUN?
DON'T TEASE HIM, MR. AMAMIYA
WE'LL BE IN THIS CITY FOR A WHILE LONGER, SO...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH US?

UMINO...
YOU'RE NOT A LITTLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL KID ANYMORE.
STOP SPEAKING LIKE ONE
BUT, UM, I'M DONE AT LUNCH-TIME
SO...
UM, CUZ I'VE BEEN WORKING SINCE THIS MORNING

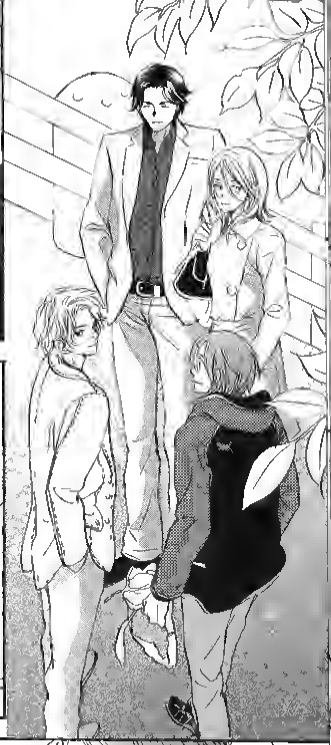
THEN LET'S JUST HAVE TEA HERE, MMM.

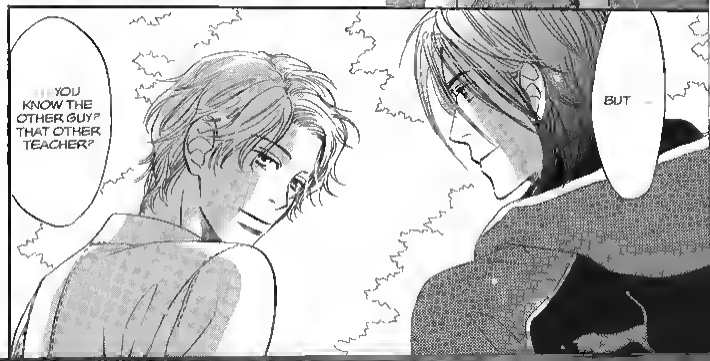
HOW'D YOU MANAGE TO MAJOR IN JAPANESE LITERATURE LIKE THAT?
がーん
STAB
はは
HA HA HA

HE WAS SOME THING
DON'T YOU THINK?
YOU KNOW...
...IT MAKES YOU WEAK IN THE KNEES WHEN HE LOOKS AT YOU.
HE MAKES YOU WANT TO GAZE ON HIM FOREVER.
TO FOLLOW HIM WITH YOUR EYES
YEAH! I GOT THAT, TOO.
TO SEE HIM AGAIN...

LOOK AT HIM...
HE LOOKS SO HAPPY
SO EAGER IT'S ALMOST TOUCHING

IT'S A SHAME, THOUGH NO MATTER HOW GOOD-LOOKING HIKARU IS...
HE'S NO MATCH FOR THAT BOYFRIEND
WE'VE GOTTA INFORM MR NAGISA!




...YOU KNOW THE OTHER GUY? THAT OTHER TEACHER?
BUT...

熱情
Passion.8

TAP
JOLT
THAT TEACHER....
I KINDA HOPE HE'LL COME AGAIN....
Passion.7 END

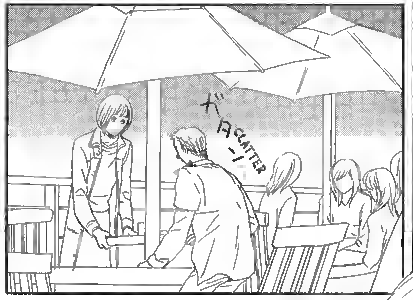
FEELS GOOD, DOESN'T IT, SIR?
YES.
IT'S A REFRESHING FEELING, TO BE SO CLOSE TO A WIDE EXPANSE OF OCEAN

NOW, THEN.
HAHA!
COME WITH ME, UMINO.
I'LL GIVE YOU MY SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MENU
WE'LL GO ORDER THE FOOD, SO...
MS. MORIKAWA, TAKESHIMA, AND GO SECURE US A TABLE, WILL YOU?
OH, DEAR.
IT LOOKS LIKE THE PLACE IS FULL

WOW! HOW BEAUTI-FUL-!
WHAT A GREAT VIEW.

KLAK
KLAK
KLIK
KLIK
ALL RIGHT! THEY'RE LEAVING!
OH! LUCKY!
JUST IN TIME

I GUESS WE'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT . . .
OH!
LOOK, MR. SHIMA...

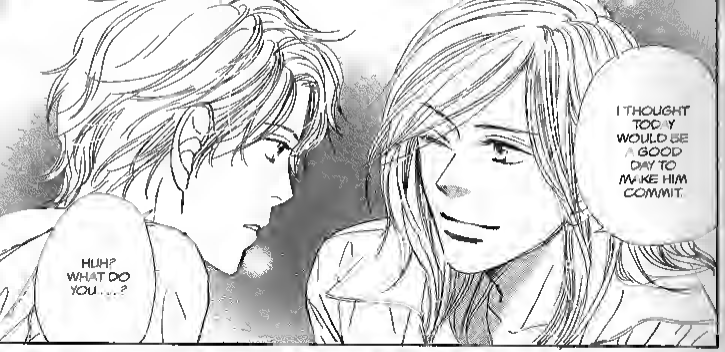

CLATTER

YOU'RE RIGHT
IT SEEMS TO BE A POPULAR SPOT

OH.
THAT TABLE IS ABOUT TO BE FREE

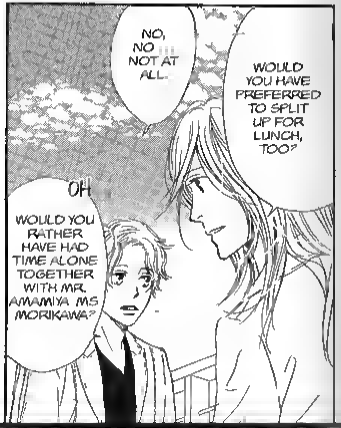
IN A WAY, THEY MAKE THE ULTIMATE COUPLE.
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THEM. AN AIR. AN ALOOF OPPRESSION. AN AURA OF PRESENCE.
AN AURA WHICH MAKES OTHERS FEEL OKAY.
ABOUT STEPPING ASIDE.
WELL, THIS TABLE SCORES HIGH MARKS FOR THE VIEW...
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, AMAMIYA'S SMOKING WON'T BE TOO MUCH OF AN ANNOYANCE IF WE'RE OUT HERE.

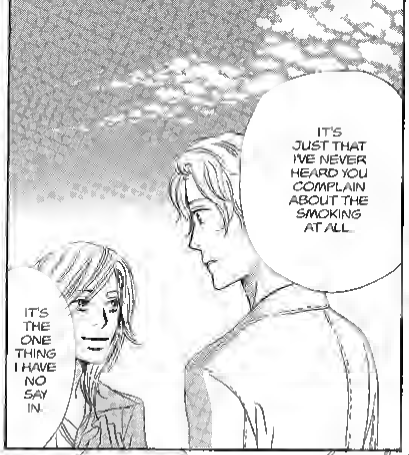
TURN
OK
LET'S TRY THAT BENCH OVER THERE
MR. SHIMA!
YES
MS. MORIKAWA AND MR. AMAMIYA.
THIS QUALITY IS WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON


I THOUGHT TODAY WOULD BE A GOOD DAY TO MAKE HIM COMMIT.
HUH? WHAT DO YOU...?

I DID FEEL BADLY, LIKE WE WERE INTRUDING ON YOU AND UMINO-KUN
NOT AT ALL
BUT, WELL, CALL IT NOSY IF YOU WILL... I WAS INTERESTED.
IN WHAT?

MR. SHIMA... AFTER LUNCH
YOU'D PREFER TO SPLIT UP WITH US FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, TOO... WOULDN'T YOU?
OH!
UH, I SUPPOSE


NO, NO... NOT AT ALL.
WOULD YOU HAVE PREFERRED TO SPLIT UP FOR LUNCH, TOO?
OH
WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE HAD TIME ALONE TOGETHER WITH MR. AMAMIYA, MS. MORIKAWA?


IT'S JUST THAT I'VE NEVER HEARD YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT THE SMOKING AT ALL.
IT'S THE ONE THING I HAVE NO SAY IN.

OH? DOES IT BOTHER YOU?
AMAMIYA'S SMOKING...

IF I HAD MY DRUTHERS, I'D LIKE HIM TO QUIT.
YOU KNOW, FOR THE HEALTH OF MY FUTURE HUSBAND
IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT ANOTHER PERSON CAN HAVE CONTROL OVER.
BUT...

SO, YOU'VE FINALIZED MARRIAGE PLANS?
WHAT?

BUT WHY ?

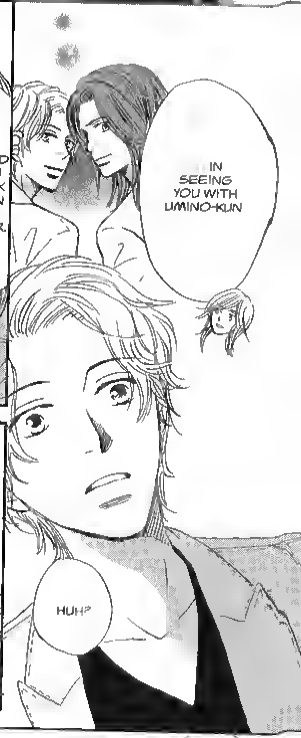
WANTING, AND YET NOT WANTING
TO SEE YOU AND HIM TOGETHER.
HUH?

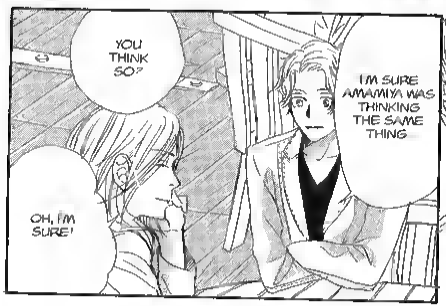
I THINK MAYBE HE'S CONCERNED ABOUT YOU TWO, YOU KNOW?
IT'S AS IF HE WANTS TO GET YOU TWO TOGETHER
AND YET FEELS RELUCTANT TO LET YOU TWO BE ALONE

WHETHER TO BE CONSIDERATE OR INTERFERING

THAT'S

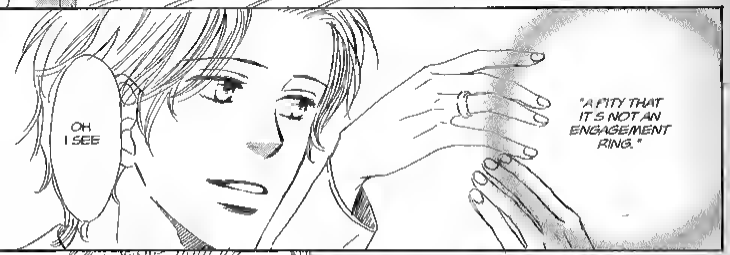
I JUST WONDERED WHAT YOU TWO LOOK LIKE WHEN YOU'RE TOGETHER.

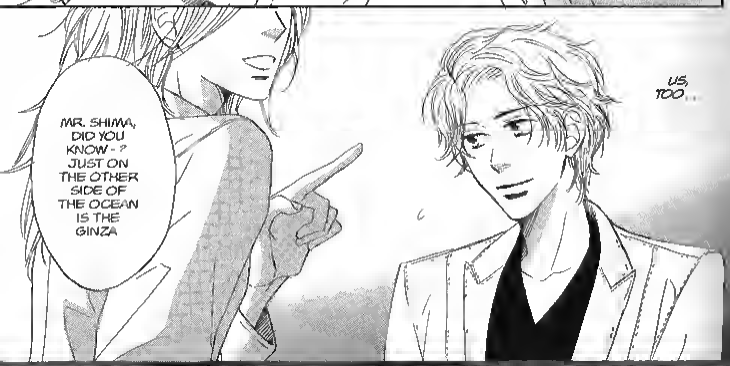

IN SEEING YOU WITH UMINO-KUN
HUH?

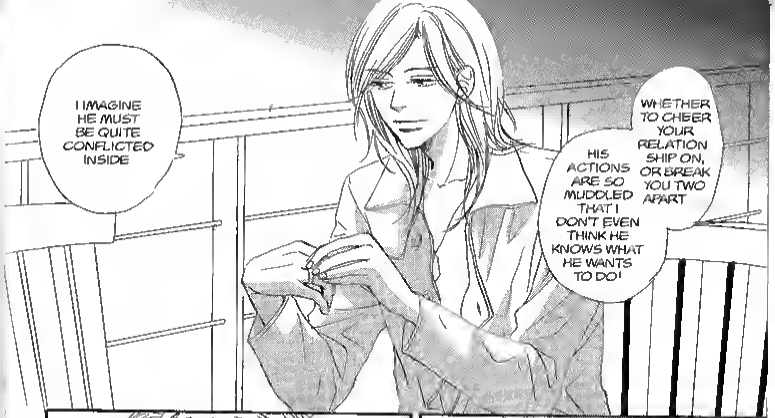

YOU THINK SO?
I'M SURE AMAMIYA WAS THINKING THE SAME THING
OH, I'M SURE!

AND IF, BY CHANCE UMINO-KUN HADN'T BEEN THERE AT WORK
I'M SURE AMAMIYA WOULD HAVE FOUND A WAY FOR US TO AMBUSH HIM AT HIS APARTMENT SOMEHOW
BECAUSE
IT SEEMS THAT HE INTENDED FROM THE BEGINNING TO INVITE YOU TO THE CAFE

I'M SECRETLY PLOTTING.
TO HAVE HIM BUY ME SOMETHING OTHER THAN JUST A REGULAR FASHION RING.
>CHUCKLE<
AFTER THIS LUNCH...


OH, I SEE
"A PITY THAT IT'S NOT AN ENGAGEMENT RING."


MR. SHIMA, DID YOU KNOW-? JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OCEAN IS THE GINZA
US, TOO...


I IMAGINE HE MUST BE QUITE CONFLICTED INSIDE
HIS ACTIONS ARE SO MUDDLED THAT I DON'T EVEN THINK HE KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS TO DO!
WHETHER TO CHEER YOUR RELATIONSHIP ON, OR BREAK YOU TWO APART

HE NEEDS ME BUT HE STILL CAN'T GET OVER YOU EITHER.

FOR HIM, I GUESS WE REALLY ARE HIS "BEAUTY ON EITHER SIDE."
BUT I'VE ALREADY...
BESIDES, HE'S ALREADY WITH YOU NOW.

I SWEAR...
HE'S SUCH A SPOILED LITTLE BOY!

I CAN SEE MR. AMAMIYA IS NEVER GOING TO BE ABLE TO WIN AGAINST YOU.
OH?
BUT THERE'S NO "WIN" OR "LOSE" BETWEEN US.
AN "EXCUSE"
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.
AND AN "OPPORTUNITY."
REALLY?
IT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT, MR. SHIMA.
NO.
THAT'S WHAT I MEANT.
YOU TWO ARE SUITED FOR EACH OTHER.
SEDUCING MS. MORIKAWA?
ODD TASTE YOU HAVE, I MUST SAY.
WHAT'S THIS, SHIMA?
I'VE GOT TO GIVE AMAMIYA THIS "EXCUSE" TO HELP HIM LET GO OF THE PAST.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'VE GOT TO MAKE HIM PROPERLY COMMIT HERE AND NOW BY BUYING ME SOMETHING EXPENSIVE.
IF HE DOES THIS, HE CAN ALWAYS SAY TO ME LATER, "I INVESTED THAT MONEY IN YOU, SO YOU'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF ME THE REST OF YOUR LIFE." YOU KNOW?
OR ELSE HE WON'T BE ABLE TO COME TO A DECISION.
THEY MUST HAVE A LOT OF BEAUTIFUL RINGS.
TO TAKE A PICK FROM!
THE GINZA, HUH?
AMAMIYA MIGHT GET COLD FEET WHEN HE HEARS THAT!

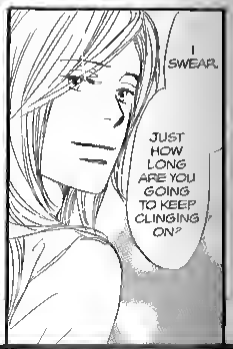
MR. AMAMIYA
UMINO KUN
DON'T TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY
IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU WANT TO EAT FROM MINE, PLEASE DON'T HESITATE
OH!
MIGHTY CONSIDERATE OF YOU!
UM, MR. SHIMA"
I ORDERED EVERYTHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM YOURS, SO
OKAY, OKAY.
REALLY! STOP TEASING UMINO-KUN SO MUCH.
YOU'RE GOING TOO FAR, DEAR.
HUH?"
OH ...
UM, OKAY ...
OOH! LEMME HAVE A PIECE OF YOUR FRIED CHICKEN, UMINO
OH ...
CLATTER
SIR.
IS THIS OKAY?
"ODD TASTE"? HOW RUDE!
SORRY WE TOOK SO LONG!
HA HA HA
YEAH, THIS IS GREAT
THANKS, HIKARU.
GRIN

HIS GAZE... HIS ATTENTION...
HIS VERY CONSCIOUSNESS ALL FOCUSED ON SHIMA
YES, THAT'S EXACTLY IT

AND YET YOU NEVER GET MAD

NOW, NOW DON'T BE JEALOUS
THAT SHIMA
BUT IF IT WAS ME
I WOULD'VE ANSWERED, "I CAN GO TO THE BATHROOM ON MY OWN, THANKS."

HAVE YOU HAD IT WITH ME?
OF COURSE! WHAT DO YOU THINK?


I SWEAR.
JUST HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP CLINGING ON?

I GUESS I'LL GO BEFORE WE START EATING
CLIP
THERE WAS ONE NEXT TO THE CASH REGISTER

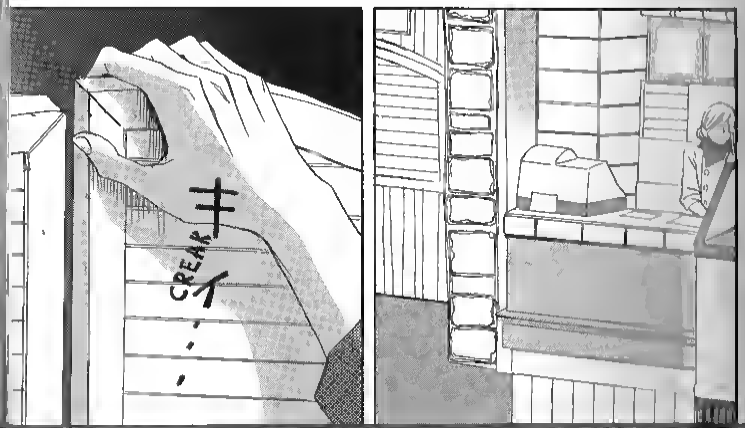
DASH
I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY.
CHUCKLE

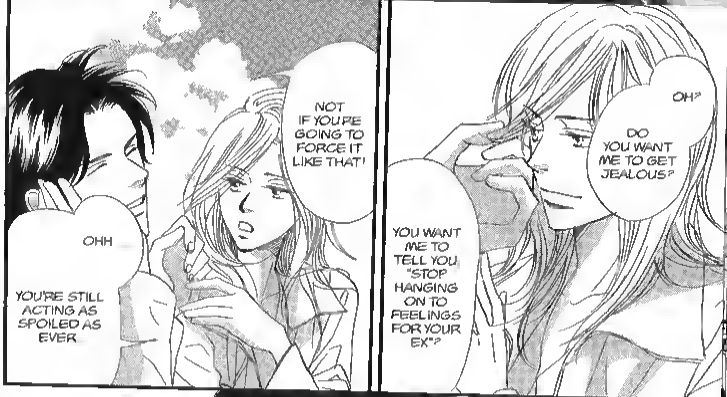
HE'S LIKE A LITTLE PUPPY IN LOVE
THAT UMINO KUN
HA HA HA!

CHOMP
LIKE A SPARE...
HEY

IS THERE A BATHROOM HERE?
STRUMP
OH!

EVERY TIME HER TOLERANT AND GENEROUS NATURE IS REVEALED TO ME...
BUT SHE NEVER DOES.
THAT'S WHY I I - A MAN OF USUALLY WANDERING AFFECTIONS - ...
WELL...
IT REALLY IS TRUE
ABOUT HAVING BEAUTY ON EITHER SIDE OF ME
... I'M OVERCOME WITH A SENSE OF REASSURANCE AND EASE
... I'M STILL NOT ABLE TO LEAVE THIS WOMAN.


CREAK


NOT IF YOU'RE GOING TO FORCE IT LIKE THAT!
OHH...
YOU'RE STILL ACTING AS SPOILED AS EVER.
OH?
DO YOU WANT ME TO GET JEALOUS?
YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU, "STOP HANGING ON TO FEELINGS FOR YOUR EX"?

I GUESS THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME...
WEAK.

IF SHE EVER SHOWED A HINT OF JEALOUSY I'D TIRE OF HER.
...BECAUSE THAT'S THE KIND OF MAN I AM.
YUP.
ALL THIS TIME, AND YOU'RE STILL A SUCKER FOR MR. SHIMA.
THAT'S NOT IT.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO RUSH OUT LIKE THAT
I'M SORRY
GRAB
OH!
OR...
WOULD YOU RATHER WAIT BY THE DOOR WHILE I DO MY BUSINESS?
OH...
SIR?
GRAB
THANKS
MENS
HERE WE ARE, SIR.
THERE'S NO ONE ELSE HERE
OH!
TURN
WHAT?
ARE YOU PLANNING ON FOLLOWING ME INSIDE TOO?
CRUCIBLE

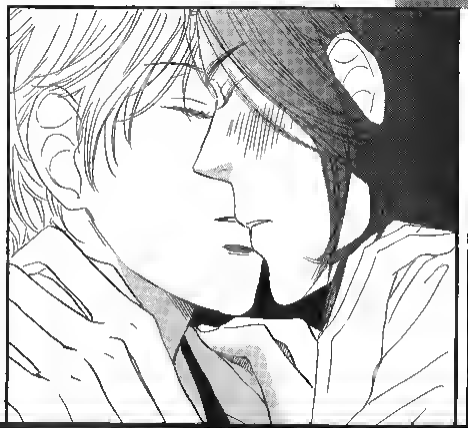
THAT'S IT?
JUST A PECK? WHEN THIS IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE SEEN EACH OTHER IN SO LONG?
SIR

I— DON'T HAVE MUCH— SELF-CONFI-DENCE
IT'S JUST THAT, RIGHT NOW
BUT
WHAT IS IT?

SIR

SHALL WE KISS BEFORE SOMEONE ELSE COMES IN?

SIR!



OKAY.
I SEE...
THEN...
I'LL CONTROL MYSELF, TOO
SO, YOU'RE GOING TO CONTROL YOURSELF?
HIKARU.
YES, I AM
-WHAT?
ドキッ

THEN AFTER LUNCH...
SHALL WE POSTPONE RING-SHOPPING AND GO STRAIGHT TO YOUR APARTMENT?
HUH?
はぁぁぁ
IF I COULD...
...I'D LIKE TO GO SOMEPLACE WHERE WE COULD BE ALONE TOGETHER.
RIGHT THIS MINUTE.
NO, I'D LIKE TO GO TODAY.
I WANT TO GO SHOPPING WITH YOU, SIR
OH...
BUT UH...
IF WE MISS THIS CHANCE TO GO SHOPPING, WE PROBABLY WON'T HAVE ANOTHER FOR A LONG TIME
HIKARU?
UM

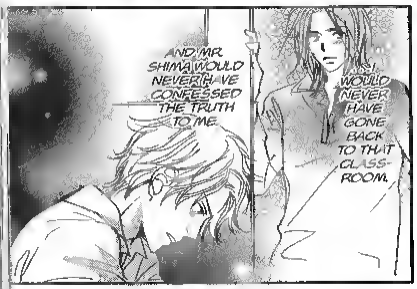
WHAT WILL YOU DO, HIKARU?
WHAT?
MAYBE HE JUST LEFT THE RESTROOM WITHOUT GOING.
. . BECAUSE HE DIDN'T FEEL LIKE IT ANYMORE?
I'M PRETTY SURE IT WASN'T JUST STOMACH TROUBLES.
I MEAN
I KNOW THE RESTROOMS HAVE ENCLOSED STALLS.
ボ
GAZE
HM?
. . . BUT THE THOUGHT THAT TEACHER WANTED TO DO SOMETHING WITH ME IN THERE. .
MAYBE IF IT WERE JUST THE TWO OF US TODAY. . .
BUT. . . S-IT H-PPENS, WE'RE HERE WITH MR. AYAKAWA AND MS. MORIKAWA TOO.
BUT. . .
. . . IT'S JUST NOT PLAUSIBLE.
DIDN'T YOU HAVE TO USE THE BATHROOM?
HUH?
UM, SIR?
LET'S HEAD BACK, HIKARU
HUH?
W. . . .
WAS HE REALLY PROPOSITIONING ME?
OR WAS THAT KISS JUST ON A WHIM. . . ?
WHAT HE SAID BACK THERE
ボ
STARE
WHAT DID HE MEAN BY IT?

GATTER
UM, SIR?
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL GO GET IT
PLEASE, YOU STAY SEATED.
HAH!
THEN I'LL HAVE AN ICE COFFEE
IT MAKES ME UNCOMFORTABLE ENOUGH MAKING TEACHER GO FETCH MY STUFF FOR ME!
BUT IT MAKES ME EVEN MORE UNCOMFORTABLE TO THINK OF LETTING HIM GO OFF ALONE WITH MR. M. MIYA...
IT'S A LITTLE... NO, MAKE THAT VERY... DISTURBING.
JUST LET HIM SPOIL YOU.
NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT
I'D LIKE TO CHOOSE MY OWN DESSERT, SO THIS TIME I'LL GO

WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY ARE YOU SPACING OUT?
HAH!
UH! NO, IT'S NOTHING
IF HE REALLY DID TAKE ME THERE FOR A REASON...
EVEN IF IT WAS ONLY FOR THAT ONE, TINY KISS...
I WOULD BE SO HAPPY...
OKAY. ONE AMERICAN CHEESECAKE
...AND A COFFEE, ALSO AMERICAN
HOT
EMPTY
NOT EVEN ANOTHER DRINK?
OH...
UM...
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR.
OH, IT'S ABOUT DESSERT.

URGH!!
WHEN DID YOU FIRST START SEEING MR. SHIMA?
UM.
HEY, UMINO KUN
SINCE THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL LAST YEAR
AROUND THEN
REALLY?
I'D BETTER NOT TELL HER ABOUT WHILE WE WERE IN SCHOOL, EITHER...
IT'S ALL TOO TOUGH
HUH?
UMM
CAN I TELL HER !!!! CIRCUMSTANCE
MEN ARE SO FUNNY.
BUT...
IS THAT TRUE?
MAYBE THAT'S A BIT FUZZY WHEN IT'S TWO MEN INVOLVED
HE WANTS TO TREAT YOU, THAT MR. SHIMA!
"TO PROVIDE FOR HIS PARTNER IS A MAN'S JOY"
"TO BE PROVIDED FOR IS A WOMAN'S JOY"
WHAT ?
THEY ALWAYS FEEL LIKE TREATING THE PERSON THEY LOVE
CHUCKLE
THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY!

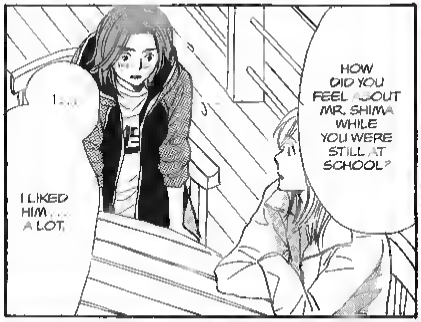
WITH WHAT I THOUGHT WOULD ALWAYS BE AN UNREQUITED LOVE FOR MR. SHIMA.
...AT THAT TIME, MY DAYS WERE FILLED...
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T BELIEVE IT, BUT...


AND MR. SHIMA WOULD NEVER HAVE CONFESSED THE TRUTH TO ME.
I WOULD NEVER HAVE GONE BACK TO THAT CLASSROOM.

HUH!
SO, HE PLAYED CUPID FOR YOU GUYS?
YES
AND I WOULDN'T BE HERE, NOW LIKE THIS...
CONTINUING TO PLAY LOVERS WITH HIM...

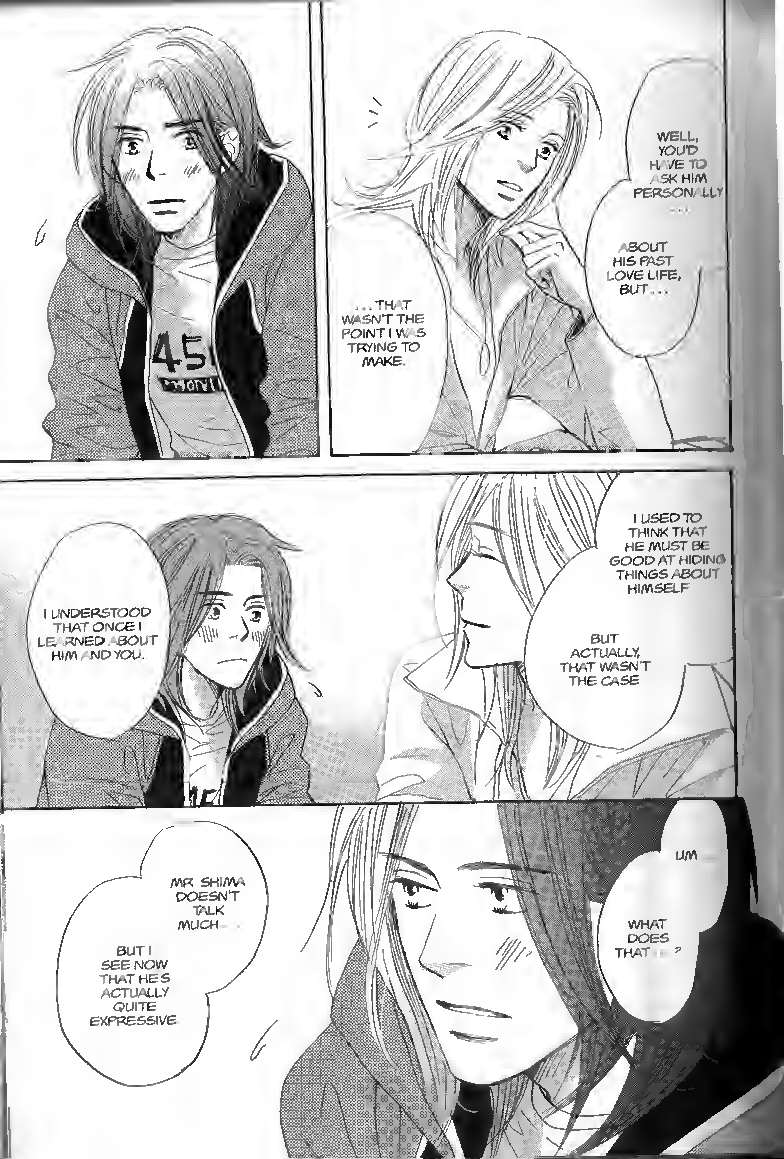
THEN, ON THE DAY OF THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL...
MR. AMAMIYA SET UP AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE TWO OF US TO MEET.
IF MR. AMAMIYA HADN'T TOLD ME THAT DAY...
THAT MR. SHIMA FELT THE SAME WAY ABOUT ME, TOO!!

IT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE HIM AT ALL.
IT JUST SEEMS OUT OF CHARACTER FOR MR. SHIMA.
YOU KNOW, TO SUDDENLY START DATING A FORMER STUDENT JUST BECAUSE THEY MET AGAIN...
YOU MEAN YOU JUST DECIDED TO GO OUT WITH EACH OTHER RIGHT THERE AT THE FESTIVAL?
WELL, UM...
IS THAT STRANGE?


I...
I LIKED HIM... A LOT.
HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT MR. SHIMA WHILE YOU WERE STILL AT SCHOOL?

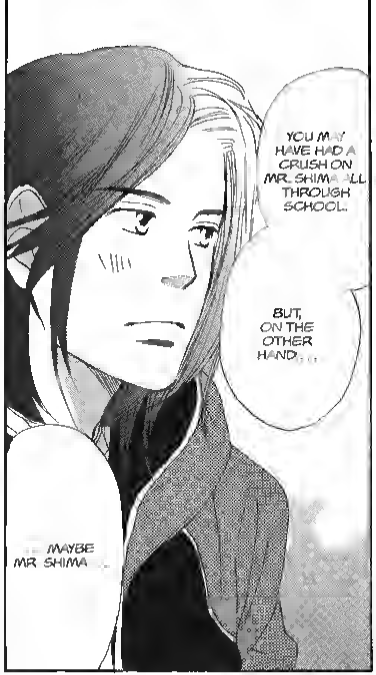
ACTUALLY, I WAS TOLD IT HADN'T BEEN JUST A ONE WAY CRUSH ON MY PART...
ON THAT DAY OF THE SCHOOL FESTIVAL.
YES!
SO YOU HAD A CRUSH ON HIM?

R-REALLY?

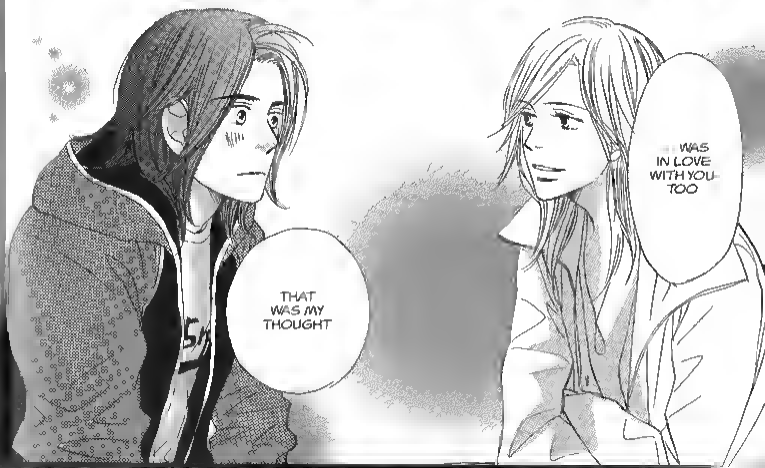

WELL, YOU'D HAVE TO ASK HIM PERSONALLY...!
ABOUT HIS PAST LOVE LIFE, BUT...
...THAT WASN'T THE POINT I WAS TRYING TO MAKE.
I USED TO THINK THAT HE MUST BE GOOD AT HIDING THINGS ABOUT HIMSELF
BUT ACTUALLY, THAT WASN'T THE CASE
I UNDERSTOOD THAT ONCE I LEARNED ABOUT HIM AND YOU.
UM...
WHAT DOES THAT...?
MR. SHIMA DOESN'T TALK MUCH...
BUT I SEE NOW THAT HE'S ACTUALLY QUITE EXPRESSIVE.

HE'S ALWAYS BEEN VERY POPULAR, BUT HE'S NEVER HAD ANYONE HE COULD CALL A STEADY.
MR. SHIMA MAY LOOK GENTEEL ON THE OUTSIDE, BUT...
HE'S ACTUALLY VERY GUARDED AND PRIVATE.
HE WAS LIKE THAT FROM BEFORE
UM WELL...
HA HA HA
THAT'S WHY AMAMIYA ACTS LIKE SUCH A BULLY TOWARDS YOU!
THAT'S WHY IT WAS SO SURPRISING
I EVEN THOUGHT THAT MAYBE HE WAS JUST THE TYPE WHO WAS GOOD AT HIDING PERSONAL THINGS LIKE THAT
WHEN THOSE RUMORS OF HIS IMPENDING MARRIAGE CAME OUT
THERE HAD BEEN NO PREVIOUS INDICATIONS OF IT AT ALL
REALLY?
UM SO
DOES THAT MEAN...
I'VE NEVER HEARD THAT ANYONE EVER SUSPECTED SUCH A THING BETWEEN US
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHEN WE WERE PLAY-ACTING AS LOVERS
HUH...
IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
MIGHT HAVE HAD A LOVER THAT NO ONE EVER KNEW ABOUT?
IT'S POSSIBLE MR. SHIMA...

45
PRRRR..
MS. MORIKAWA...
IS THAT REALLY SUPPOSED TO BE A PEP TALK?
PRRR..
PRRRR
WHATEVER THE CASE...
MR. SHIMA HAS BECOME MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE NOW THANKS TO YOU, UMINO-KUN.
YOU'D BETTER TRY YOUR DARNEDEST NOT TO LET MR. AMAMIYA STEAL HIM BACK FROM YOU


...MAYBE MR. SHIMA...
BUT, ON THE OTHER HAND...
YOU MAY HAVE HAD A CRUSH ON MR. SHIMA ALL THROUGH SCHOOL..

I'VE SEEN LOOKS ON MR. SHIMA'S FACE THAT I'D NEVER WITNESSED BEFORE...
THAT SIDE OF HIM REALLY COMES OUT WHENEVER HE'S WITH YOU


THAT WAS MY THOUGHT
...I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU TOO

OKAY. OKAY.
NAGISA
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM?
YOU'D THINK HE'D TURN HIS CELL PHONE OFF...
WHEN HE'S ON A PRECIOUS DATE WITH SHIMA
THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR... FROM THAT NIGHT I VISITED HIKARU'S APARTMENT...
HE HAD TO TAKE IT... IT WAS A CALL FROM SOMEONE NAMED MR. NAGISA A CO WORKER, I GUESS
HE WAS JUST CONCERNED THAT SOMETHING MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED AT THE WORKPLACE, SO
LET'S LET HIM SLIDE ON THIS ONE

MR. NAGISA?
HE'S SOMEONE FROM WORK, AND...
OH!
MAYBE SOMETHING HAPPENED AT THE CAFE!
EXCUSE ME, MS. MORIKAWA.
カチャ CLICK
HUH?
THAT'S WEIRD.
PRRR...
IT'S FROM MR. NAGISA.
HELLO?
HUH?
UMINO...

Passion.9
熱情

...IT'S THAT MAN WHO WAS EMBRACING HIKARU!
Passion.8 END

IT'S SO UNUSUAL FOR YOU TO BE CALLING ME ON MY CELL, SO...
I THOUGHT FOR SURE THAT IT MUST BE AN EMERGENCY!
WHEW, I'M SO GLAD
THERE'S NO PROBLEM
NO PROBLEM AT ALL.
HA HA
I JUST HAPPENED TO BE NEAR THE CAFE.
WHEN ODA GAVE ME A LITTLE CALL WITH THE LOWDOWN

A...!!
ALL HELL...?
JOLT
I JUST DROPPED IN FOR A BIT... AND THAT'S WHEN ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE.
LOWDOWN?
HUH?

HELLO?
MR NAGISA?
WHAT'S UP?
IS THERE A PROBLEM WITH THE SCHEDULE ROTATION OR SOMETHING?
NO, NO
NOTHING LIKE THAT

YES

FIDGET
FIDGET
THOSE SLACKERS! MAKING SOMEONE ELSE DO THEIR BIDDING
THEY ALL WENT CRAZY, TELLING ME TO "FIND OUT HOW HIKARU'S DOING."
WHA?
SO, THAT'S WHY I'M CALLING YOU AS THEIR REPRESEN TATIVE
ARE YOU WITH THOSE FORMER SCHOOL TEACHERS OF YOURS RIGHT NOW?"
UHM... IN OTHER WORDS

YOU'VE FINALLY GOT THE AFTERNOON OFF...
...SO SPEND SOME TIME WITH ME FOR ONCE, HIKARU.
HAVE YOU GOT THE WHOLE DAY OFF TODAY, MR. NAGISA?
THAT'S RIGHT.
SO, HOW LONG ARE THOSE TEACHERS OF YOURS GOING TO BE IN TOWN?
?
WHY DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
YOU'LL BE FREE TONIGHT, WON'T YOU?
YOUR TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE GONE HOME BY THEN
COME ON, WE'VE FINALLY BOTH GOT THE SAME NIGHT OFF
WHAT DO YOU SAY?

SIGH!!
YOUR MADONNA IS THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION HERE, YOU KNOW.
WHAT?
...MR. SHIMA'S FORMER LOVER!
...AS IF I WASN'T WORRIED ENOUGH OVER MR. M. MA...
D...
PLEASE DON'T GOSSIP LIKE THAT!
I CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE ANY MORE RIVALS.

THAT MEANS WE'LL ONLY HAVE A FEW HOURS ALONE TOGETHER.
NO, PERHAPS EVEN EARLIER THAN THAT.
ALL FOUR OF US MIGHT HAVE TO GET TOGETHER FOR DINNER.
AND THEN MR. SHIMA WILL BE RETURNING BACK HOME WITH MR. AMAMIYA AND MS. MORIKAWA.
WE CAN AT LEAST HAVE A DRINK.
RIGHT?
BUT
I COULD SEE MR. NAGISA IF I WANTED TO...
BY EIGHT OR NINE MR. SHIMA AND THE OTHERS WILL BE LEAVING ON THE TRAIN.
5r

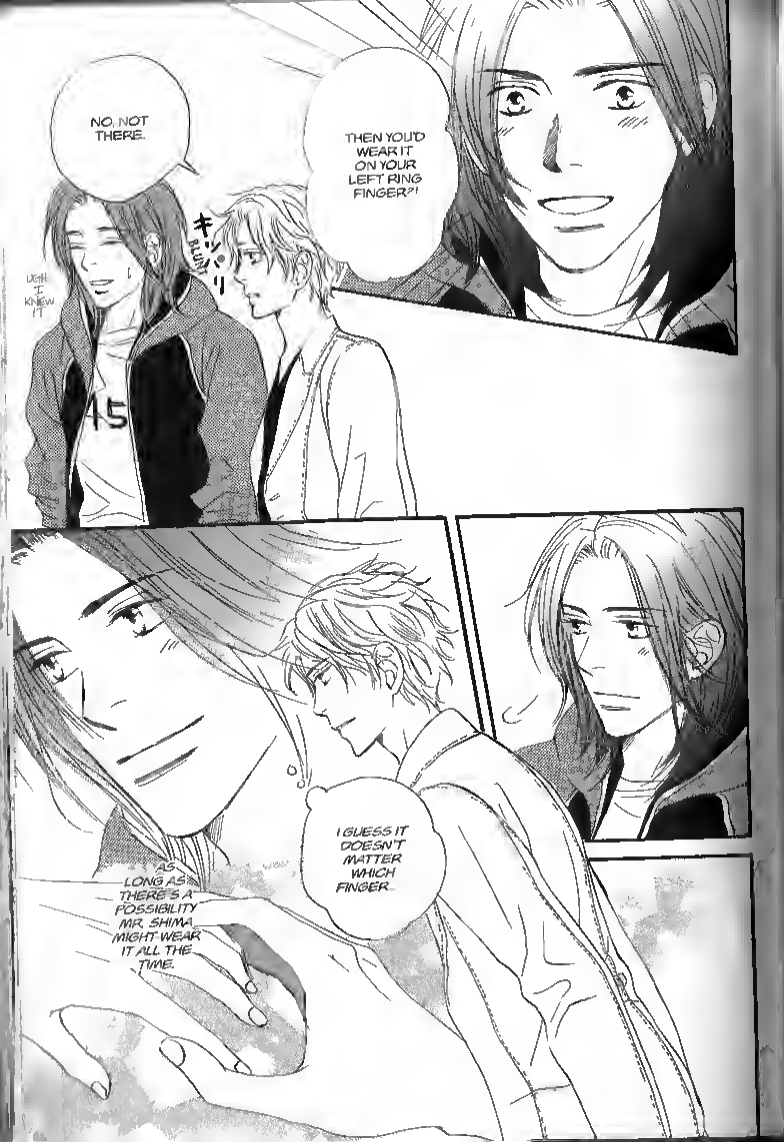
I KNOW THAT...
AND ANYWAY, EVEN THOUGH WE'RE SPLITTING UP FROM MR. AMAMIYA AND MS. MORIKAWA FOR THE AFTERNOON...
WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO MEET BACK UP WITH THEM AFTER DINNER.
AT THE FACT THAT I'M A STUDENT MYSELF ASIDE...
TOMORROW IS MONDAY... SCHOOL DAY.
MR. SHIMA'S GOT TO GO BACK TO WORK.
I CAN'T KEEP HIM UP TOO LATE.

... JUST HAVING BEEN ABLE TO SEE HIM, TO BE WITH HIM TODAY...
I SHOULD BE HAPPY ENOUGH WITH THAT.
I KNOW THAT BUT...
I WANT TO BE WITH MR. SHIMA FOR AS LONG AS I POSSIBLY CAN.
...IF I COULD, I'D MAKE HIM STAY.
I'M SO SELFISH
I'LL EVEN GET TO GO RING SHOPPING WITH HIM AND YET
CLENCH
SIR?
OKAY, I REPENT!
THANK YOU FOR THE ICE COFFEE!
I'M NOT GONNA COMPLAIN!
NO! ACTING SO CHILDISH IS AN INSULT TO MR. SHIMA!
FLING
FLING
FLING

I SEE.
I'M SORRY.
OUR SCHEDULE'S STILL PRETTY FLUID RIGHT NOW, SO I CAN'T MAKE ANY PROMISES.
THEN I'LL CALL BACK AGAIN LATER.
HUH?!
LATER.
CLICK
I THOUGHT I'D SUBTLY TURNED HIM DOWN, BUT...

THE GINZA WOULDN'T SUIT HIK-RU.
UM
WHAT ABOUT OVER TO AOYAMA OR DAIKANYAMA?
THAT SOUNDS GOOD.
OR ME, EITHER PROBABLY.
YOU, UM, COULDN'T WEAR IT, RIGHT?
SIR?
WHEN YOU GO TO SCHOOL
I COULDN'T WEAR ONE ON A REGULAR BASIS, NOT WHERE I WORK.
AT ANY RATE, I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO WEAR ANY DECENT, SUITABLE LOOKING RING

WELL, THEN
WE'LL BE HEADING OVER TO THE GINZA NOW.
OH, RIGHT
THEN SEE YA LATER, SHIMA.
GOOD LUCK.
HUH?
OH...
NOW...
WHERE SHOULD WE GO?


NO, NOT THERE.
THEN YOU'D WEAR IT ON YOUR LEFT RING FINGER?!
キッパリ
UGH! I KNEW IT
I GUESS IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH FINGER...
AS LONG AS THERE'S A POSSIBILITY MR. SHIMA MIGHT WEAR IT ALL THE TIME.

ドッキ
UM
WELL...
YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T WANT TO WEAR A RING... AT LEAST, NOT DURING SCHOOL...
IF I RECALL
HM?
WHY?
I GUESS IT'LL DEPEND ON THE DESIGN
IF IT'S NOT TOO FLASHY
OR SO SIMPLE AS TO BE OBVIOUS WHAT IT IS, I'D THINK ABOUT IT
THAT'S NOT SET IN STONE OR ANYTHING
R REALLY?!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HAVE I JUST BEEN STAMPEDING AHEAD ON MY OWN AGAIN?
UM. PERHAPS YOU AREN'T REALLY INTO THIS...?
SIR...?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN
IS IT THAT YOU... DON'T REALLY WANT TO?
BUYING A PAIR OF MATCHING RINGS...
DON'T BE SILLY

A RING LIKE THAT...
...I'LL PROBABLY NEVER WEAR IN MY LIFETIME
...WHAT KIND OF RING WOULD YOU LIKE, SIR?
UM
SOMETHING LIKE PLATINUM?
...IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE ANYTHING EXPENSIVE.
LIKE I SAID...
STRIDE
SIR...?
BUT NOT ME.

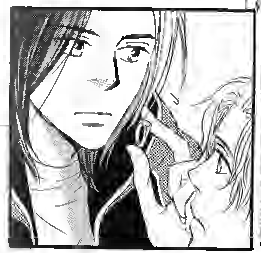
THEY HAVE THE POSSIBILITY OF CREATING A FAMILY...
WITH THE PERSON THEY LOVE AND CHERISH...
THAT IS WHY I ALWAYS FIND SOLUTION IN HIKARU.
THAT IS WHY I ALWAYS RESPOND TO HIM HONESTLY.
IT'S NOT THAT I'M RELUCTANT TO WEAR MATCHING RINGS WITH YOU, OR ANYTHING
I WAS JUST FEELING A LITTLE ENVIOUS OF AMAMIYA AND MS. MORIKAWA
HUH?
BUT WHY?
HE'S SO FUNNY
BUT...
WHAT POINT WOULD THERE BE IN MY LYING TO YOU, HIKARU?
AND YET, HIKARU ALWAYS MANAGES TO BE CONSIDERATE FOR MY FEELINGS.
IT MAY BE TRUE THAT IT'S INSTANT ROMANCE...
IT MAY ALSO BE TRUE THAT IT'S BECAUSE HE'S THICK ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS...
TOUCH
WITHOUT EVEN REALIZING IT, HE GRANTS ME MY WISHES AS IF THEY SPRANG FROM HIS OWN THOUGHTS.
THE THINGS I WANT DONE MOST
...HE, SOMEHOW IMAGINES MIRACULOUSLY TO GIVE TO ME THE THINGS I WANT MOST
EVEN IF HE'S NOT CONSCIOUSLY BEING CONSIDERATE...

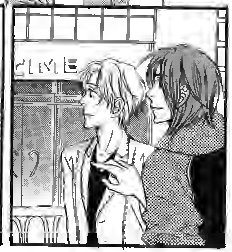
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE...
まぶ
SQUEEZE
IT'S GETTING CROWDED
PLEASE DON'T GET SEPARATED FROM ME, SIR.
LEAD THE WAY
OKAY
WHAT?
OF ME?
WHAT ON EARTH FOR?!
I DON'T HAVE A SINGLE QUALITY TO BOAST ABOUT!
I'M ENVIOUS OF YOU, TOO.
IF THERE SHOULD COME THE DAY WHEN WE PART...
THE SAME IS NOT TRUE FOR HIKARU.
HIKARU HAS IT IN HIM TO SOMEDAY START A FAMILY WITH A WOMAN IF HE WANTED TO. I CAN FEEL IT.
ALTHOUGH I WILL PROBABLY LIVE THE REST OF MY LIFE UNMARRIED.

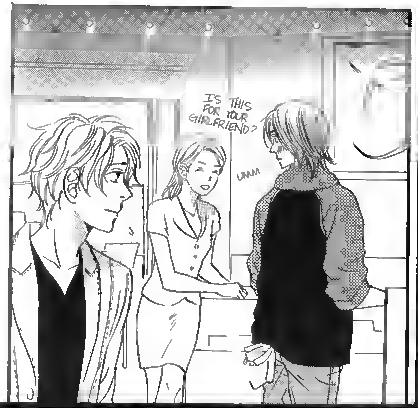
SIGH!
I GUESS IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO FIND THE PERFECT RING

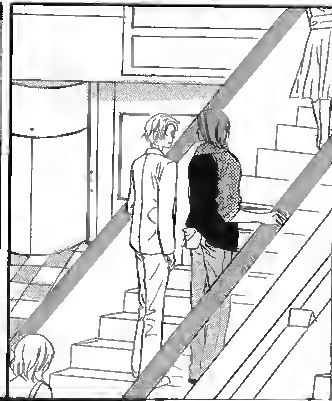
ON THE CONTRARY! IT ACTUALLY FILLS ME WITH A SENSE OF HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT.
WATCHING HIKARU PORE SO EARNESTLY OVER THE COUNTER, CHOOSING THE PERFECT RING
IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING SO INDECISIVE
I'M SORRY, SIR.
NO, I'M BEING THE SAME WAY TOO

HMM
THIS ISN'T QUITE RIGHT






IS THIS FOR YOUR GIRLFRIEND?
UMM



IT'S MR. NAGISA
ガタン!
CLAK
I FORGOT
I MEANT TO CALL SO I COULD TURN HIM DOWN CLEARLY.
EXCUSE ME A MINUTE, SIR.
I'M SO RELIEVED I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO IF YOU'D SAID YOU'D HAD ENOUGH
MY HEART WAS IN MY MOUTH!
はは
HA HA HA
MESSAGE FROM NAGISA
OH!
I KNOW!
MAYBE I'LL DO A SEARCH ON THE NET
CLICK
PRRRR...
HUH?!

HEY HIKARU?
I'M SERIOUS, YOU KNOW
HUH?
SERIOUS?
ABOUT WHAT?
HA
MY LOVE FOR YOU.
THAT'S WHAT.

WHOA
PIP
SO, HIKARU, HOW'S YOUR SCHEDULE LOOKING FOR TONIGHT?

ABOUT THAT....
IT JUST WON'T BE POSSIBLE TONIGHT.
EVEN IF IT TURNS OUT I END UP SPENDING THIS NIGHT ALONE...

IF I CAN'T BE WITH MR. SHIMA...
I'D RATHER BE ALONE TO BASK IN THE MEMORY OF THIS DAY WE HAD TOGETHER.
OH?
...I DON'T WANT TO BE WITH ANYONE AT ALL.

YOU BROUGHT ME BEER THAT OTHER TIME, TO CHEER ME ON IN MY STUDIES
I'M TRULY GRATEFUL FOR THAT
THAT... INCLUDES ME, TOO
EVERYONE IS VERY FOND OF YOU.
I KNEW IT! YOU'RE NOT TAKING ME SERIOUSLY.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
THANK YOU!!
BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO TRY TO CHEER ME UP
BY THE WAY, HIKARU!
WELL...
I GUESS THAT'S ALL RIGHT
ハハハ
OH.
SO I SEE YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT YOU'RE EVERYONE'S SOURCE OF ENTERTAINMENT, THEN
45↑
BY THAT, YOU MEAN
YOU JUST WANT TO USE ME AS FODDER FOR GOSSIP WITH THE GUYS, RIGHT?
IT WAS THE SAME WAY IN HIGH SCHOOL
WELL... YES I SUPPOSE...
YOU'RE SUCH A POPULAR GUY, HIKARU.
SOMEHOW I THINK IT'S SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT THAN THAT.
THAT'S NOT TRUE
I WAS ALWAYS REGARDED AS SOME KIND OF PLAYTHING BY MY FRIENDS.
AND A LITTLE USED TOO
IT'S NOT AS IF I MINDED, THOUGH.
I WASN'T HAPPY ABOUT IT EITHER BUT

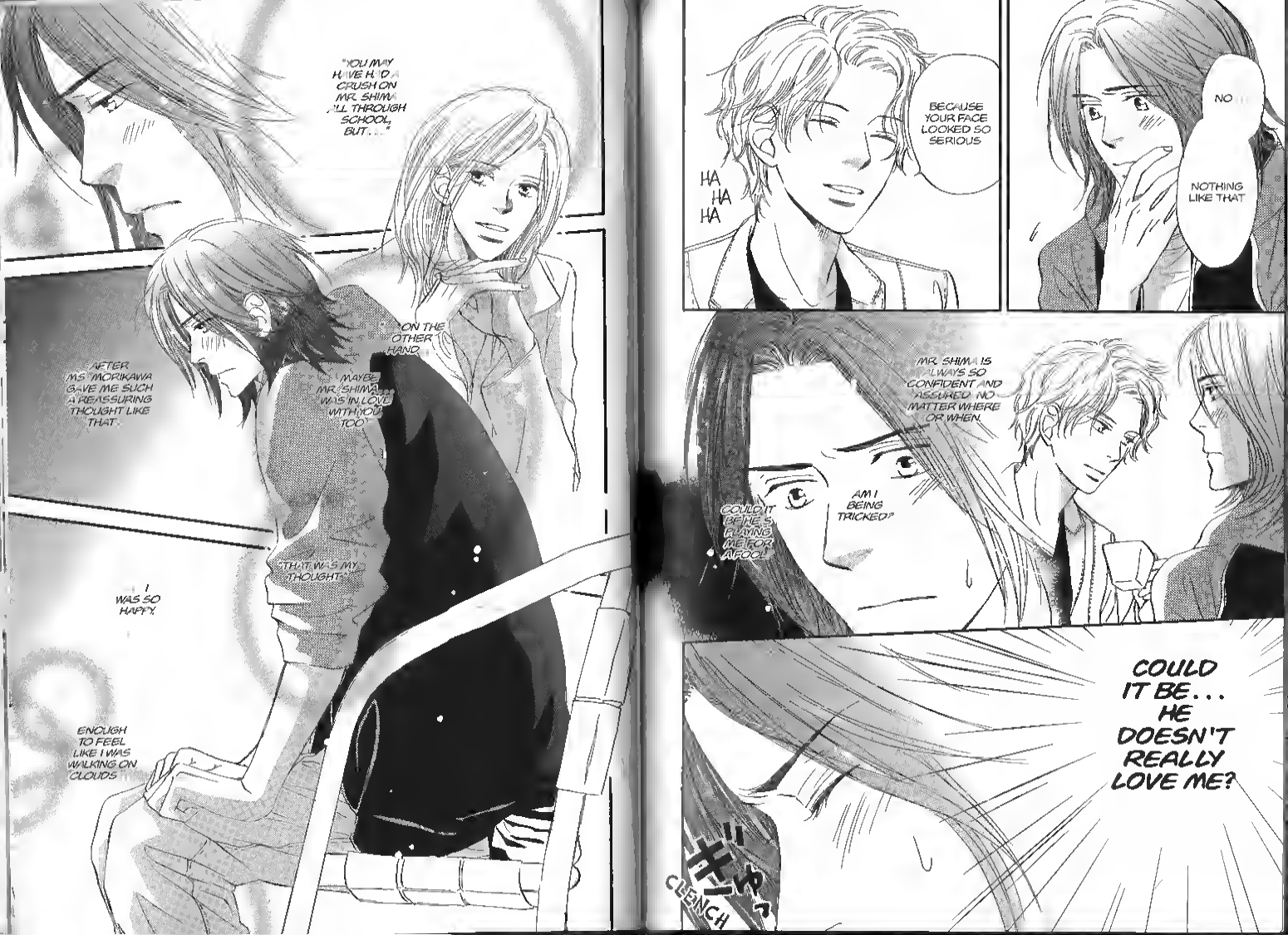
BUT MR. NAGISA...
MY TEACHER IS NOT THAT KIND OF PERSON.
AN ADULT WITH A PROPER JOB, A PLACE IN SOCIETY...
OH, REALLY?
IS MAKING A COLLEGE STUDENT LIKE YOU WORK TO SUPPORT THEM, RIGHT?
I'M NOT BEING FORCED TO, OR ANYTHING
I'M DOING IT BECAUSE I WANT TO
THAT'S WHAT I'M SAYING!
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT BEING NEATLY TRICKED INTO IT?
WHAT IF YOU'RE JUST BEING WRUNG DRY?
YOU KNOW, ONLY TO BE TOSSED ASIDE ONCE YOU'RE NO LONGER OF ANY INTEREST?
...HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THAT?
MY
WHOM?
BY...
USED?
AREN'T YOU AFRAID
YOU'RE BEING USED?
DO YOU REALLY THINK SOME ONE LIKE THAT...
IS SERIOUS ABOUT A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU?
WHAT—?
DON'T YOU THINK THE ODDS OF THAT ARE A LITTLE SLIM?
TH
THAT'S
I'M NOT TRYING TO BE MEAN OR ANYTHING
ON THE CONTRARY. I'M ONLY SAYING THIS BECAUSE I'M CONCERNED FOR YOU
THAT GORGEOUS BEAUTY OF YOURS...
AND A MATURE ADULT, NO LESS.

ILL MATCHED?
LET ME ASK YOU THIS
HAS YOUR TEACHER EVER BEEN JEALOUS ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE YOU'RE CLOSE TO, HIKARU?
NOT EVER?
MR. SHIMA HAS ALWAYS ACTED MATURE AND ADULT
BUT
I DON'T THINK SO
N--
NO, NOTHING LIKE THAT
HA-HA!
I WONDER
THE GUYS SENT ME THAT PHOTO THEY SECRETLY TOOK.
HONK HONK
WHEW
IT WAS PLAINLY OBVIOUS TO ME THAT YOU TWO ARE AN ILL MATCHED PAIR
...YOU AND YOUR TEACHER.
JOLT
MY TEACHER WOULD NEVER DO A THING LIKE THAT!

I DON'T WANT TO CONTINUE SUCH A CONVERSATION!
I DON'T WANT TO RECEIVE ANY MORE PHONE CALLS FROM MR. NAGISA
TSK TSK! HANGING UP ON ME?
THAT'S NOT LIKE YOU, MY LITTLE HIKARU
CLICK!
ISN'T IT NATURAL FOR SOMEONE TO SHOW AT LEAST A LITTLE HINT OF JEALOUSY IF THEY REALLY LOVE YOU?
EVEN ABOUT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH MR. AMAMIYA
I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S ALWAYS ANXIOUS AND WORRIED
THE FACT THAT THEY HAVEN'T
WELL, YOU CAN FIGURE IT OUT, CAN'T YOU?
PRESS
OFF

LOOK, SEE?
JUST LIKE THAT
WITH HIS PRESENCE
HE QUIETLY GATHERS THE ATTENTION OF EVERYONE AROUND HIM.
...HE CAN CHANGE THE ATMOSPHERE
WHAT'S WRONG, HIKARU?
WHAT?
WAS IT A TROUBLING PHONE CALL?

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AWARE THAT WE'RE ILL MATCHED
MR. SHIMA IS MATURE
AND SO VERY BEAUTIFUL...
PERHAPS
I MAY HAVE HIT A LITTLE TOO CLOSE TO HOME?


"YOU MAY HAVE HAD A CRUSH ON MR. SHIMA ALL THROUGH SCHOOL, BUT..."
AFTER MS. MORIKAWA GAVE ME SUCH A REASSURING THOUGHT LIKE THAT...
ON THE OTHER HAND...
MAYBE MR. SHIMA WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU TOO
THAT WAS MY THOUGHT.
I WAS SO HAPPY.
ENOUGH TO FEEL LIKE I WAS WALKING ON CLOUDS.
HA HA HA
BECAUSE YOUR FACE LOOKED SO SERIOUS
NO...
NOTHING LIKE THAT
MR. SHIMA IS ALWAYS SO CONFIDENT AND ASSURED NO MATTER WHERE OR WHEN.
AM I BEING TRICKED?
COULD IT BE HE'S PLAYING ME FOR A FOOL!
COULD IT BE... HE DOESN'T REALLY LOVE ME?
CLENCH

D...
DON'T YOU WANT TO?
WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME UNTIL WE HAVE TO MEET UP WITH AYUMIYA AGAIN. BUT...
C...
COULD YOU COME OVER
WOULD YOU COME OVER...
TO...
TO MY APARTMENT AFTER ALL?
BUT...
WITH JUST THAT ONE SENTENCE
"HAS YOUR TEACHER EVER BEEN JEALOUS ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE YOU'RE CLOSE TO, HIKARU?"
M
MR. SHIMA!
YOU MEAN, RIGHT NOW?

Cupid's arrows gone awry

RIN!

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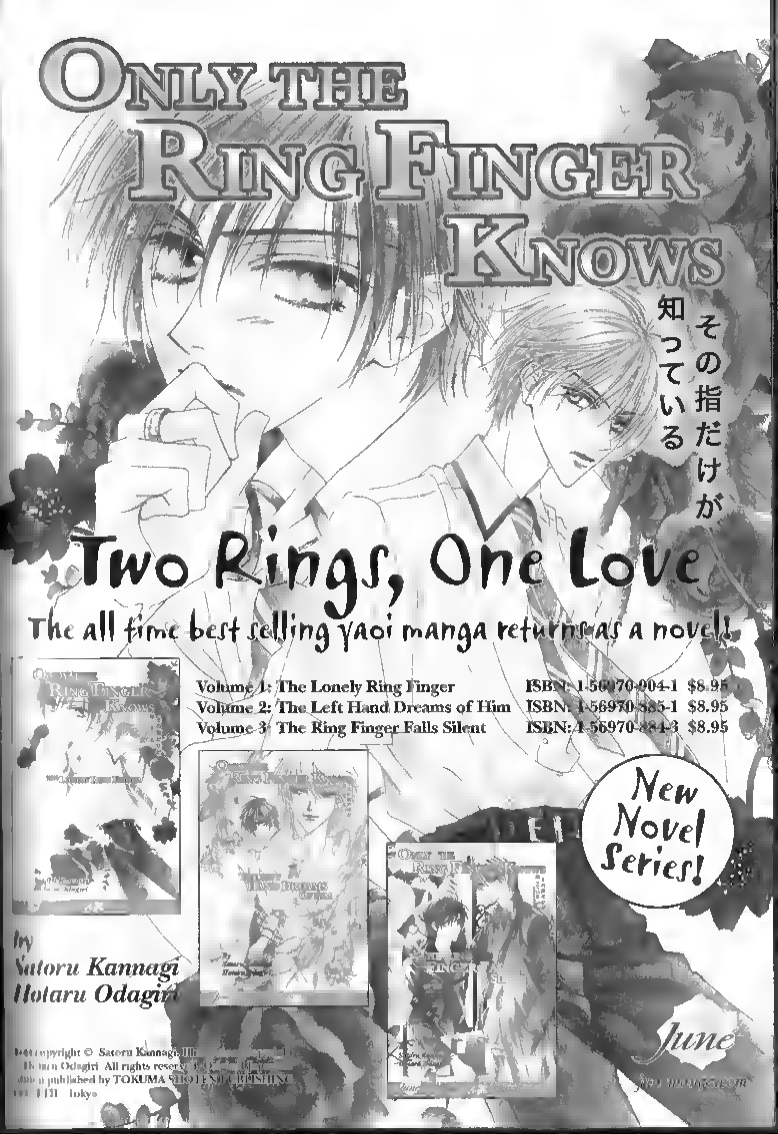
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